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AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND SERMONS  
OF REV. JOHN GRAHAM



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# AUTOBIOGRAPHY

AND

## REMINISCENCES

OF

REV. JOHN GRAHAM

LATE PASTOR OF THE ASSOCIATE, NOW THE  
UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATION OF  
BOVINA, DELAWARE CO. N. Y.

WITH AN APPENDIX CONTAINING SOME INTERESTING AND  
IMPORTANT LETTERS TO THE AUTHOR FROM REV. DR. MC  
CRIE, THE CELEBRATED CHURCH HISTORIAN, AUTHOR  
OF THE LIVES OF JOHN KNOX AND ANDREW  
MELVILLE, &C. &C., AND OTHER EMINENT MIN-  
ISTERS OF SCOTLAND OF A FORMER DAY.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED A FEW OF HIS SERMONS.

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WM. S. RENTOUL: PHILADELPHIA.  
1870.

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## PREFACE.

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THE following Reminiscences were written at leisure times principally for my own edification, and were designed to be left for the benefit of surviving relatives, in order that they might know something respecting the way the Lord has led me in the wilderness of this world, with the hope that they might be induced to trust in the same merciful and unerring Guide. I have, however, been led to change my mind, and to set up my Ebenezer in this public manner during my lifetime, at the earnest request of several brethren into whose hands part of the Manuscript had fallen. I am deeply convinced of the many defects of this book, and of its unfitness to stand strict literary criticism. Knowing that it will be read and appreciated only by those who were more or less acquainted with me, or with the events, persons, and places described, I have "used all plainness of speech." I trust I have the approbation of God in telling to the world what He has done for my soul, and how, where, and when He has led me and fed me, all my life long; by concealing which I would have been ungrateful and criminal: and as for the groundless disapprobation of a fellow-worm, it shall never disturb me.

The Sermons were originally preached to the congregation of which I was Pastor, and were afterwards

re-written, condensed, and published in the *Evangelical Repository*, along with many others, under the signature of "Delaware." They have been selected principally because they were shorter than some of the rest. I have recently read them all over carefully, and have derived much comfort and consolation from the priceless doctrines which they contain. And now when I am old, "worshipping God leaning on the top of my staff," looking by faith beyond the Jordan of death to the goodly land on the other side, into which, through the atoning sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, I hope soon to enter, I declare my firm belief in all these precious truths set forth in them, as being agreeable to and founded on the word of God.

It is my earnest desire that this humble production may be blessed for promoting the cause of Christ, and for instructing, edifying, and comforting some of His true friends, when the mortal remains of its author shall be sleeping in the dust, among the sweet-smelling flowers of the prairie, unheeded and forgotten,—yet not forgotten by my Lord and Saviour, but "resting in hope" that in the morning of the resurrection they shall arise immortal and incorruptible, and meet the Lord in the air. "Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee; thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands."

WINTERSET, MADISON CO, IOWA, }  
August 27th, 1869.

J. G.

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# AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND REMINISCENCES

OF

REV. JOHN GRAHAM.

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## CHAPTER I.

FROM MY BIRTH TILL I BECAME A COLLEGE STUDENT WITH A  
VIEW TO THE MINISTRY.

My Birth and boyhood—Desire to go to sea—My parents opposed to it—Engaged to a farmer—Serious accident, which lamed me for life—My consequent despondency, and perplexity what employment then to turn to—Served a three years' apprenticeship to the trade of a tailor, with my uncle—The unkind treatment I received from him when my apprenticeship expired—Left my native town—Removed to Arbroath—Where I lived one year—There experienced a spiritual change and found kind friends—Joined the Seceders—Their religious principles and character at that period—Removed to Edinburgh—Annoyances from my ungodly fellow-workmen—My desire to change my employment, and for mental improvement—Began to attend Prayer and Conference Meetings—The great benefits to be derived from these—Attended a course of Lectures in Anatomy after my day's labor—How I got quit for life of the use of a crutch.

I WAS born in Montrose, Scotland, in the year 1794. My parents were members of the Established Church. I received a common school education, and might have been a good scholar if I only had been studious, but I was too much taken up with other things, especially in working on board of ships and sailing in boats, to make much progress in education. When about fourteen years of age, I had made up my mind to become a sailor, go to sea, and visit foreign lands; which was contrary to the will of my

parents, who endeavoured to change my purpose. In this they did not succeed for some time, until I had several narrow escapes of my life by falling into the sea. What we cannot do to change our own designs or those of others, God often does accomplish by selecting and making use of means peculiar to Himself, and these almost always contrary to our expectations. Thus He says, "Be still, and know that I am God." My parents thought that by removing me from the sea shore, and sending me into the country, I might perhaps change my mind, become a farmer, or follow some other occupation. I was, accordingly, engaged to a farmer for a year. But we little know what is to be the result of our schemes, however lawful and expedient they may be in themselves, and although they may afford every prospect of succeeding according to our expectations. We should, therefore, form them with dependence on and submission unto the will of God; saying, "Not our will, but thine be done! If the Lord will, we shall do this or that." Though sixty years have passed over my head since that period of my life to which I refer, yet I still continue to bless God for what He then permitted to take place, in order to change my purpose, and I trust also my heart, without which I might have filled an early grave, and have had my portion with the wicked.

I went to my new situation with good will. It gave great satisfaction to my parents that I was away from the sea, out of the reach of danger as they thought; and that I had the prospect of soon being in a way of being a comfort to them, and a benefit to myself. But alas! we do not know how near our troubles are, or how "soon our prosperous state may be turned into misery." I had only been in the service of my employer for about six months, when I was sent a few miles distant to bring home some young cattle, and while running after them I fell and dislocated my hip joint; which, having been neglected too long, could never be replaced. This was the cause of my lameness, causing me to halt on my thigh ever since. This was a heavy trial to my father and mother, as well as a great affliction and disappointment to myself: to be brought back lame, sick, and helpless, who went out sound, healthy, and active; and to have my prospects and calculations in



life turned upside down. We are disposed frequently, like Jacob, to think that God's dispensations are against us, while they are all working together for our good; or to say with Naomi, when she returned a homeless, helpless widow, after having buried her husband and two sons in a foreign land,—“Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me back empty; why then call me Naomi (beautiful or agreeable), seeing the Lord hath testified against me and the Almighty hath afflicted me?” God, in his love and mercy, has wisely kept parents in ignorance, when they are nursing and bringing up their children, what troubles are to overtake them, and what grief and vexations they may cause them; otherwise, it would embitter their joys, and discourage their hearts. Let them diligently and faithfully discharge their duty, by training them up in the way they should go, trusting in Him who has said, “I will be a God unto you and to your seed after you;” and who can bring light out of darkness, order out of confusion, and “meat out of the eater.”

It was twelve long wearisome months before I was able to be out of the house; and even then I could not walk without crutches. Oh what a change! I still remember how my proud, youthful heart was humbled and broken when I could not join my former companions in their amusements; and how those who were once my inferiors in strength and activity mocked me and abused me. I learned by experience (the best of teachers) the force of what the Prophet says, “It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth. He sitteth alone, and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him.” Owing to my lameness, and the poor state of my health, it was difficult to decide what I should have recourse to in order to make a living. I was unable to endure the confinement of school to obtain an education; or to engage in any occupation which required strength or activity: hence, darkness and discouragement hung over the present and the future. If we had only more faith and patience, it would be far better for us, and we should be relieved from many doubts and fears: *faith* in Him who ordains whatsoever comes to pass, and *patience* to wait for his will. Not having these graces

in exercise produces great perplexity, and often causes us to fall into "the slough of despond."

I had an uncle in Montrose, a brother of my mother's, who was by occupation a tailor, kept several men working for him, and carried on quite a respectable business. It was thought that if I could learn the trade with him, it might be for my benefit. I was, accordingly, bound as an apprentice to him for three years. It was agreed that I should get my board and clothing, and go home to my father's home every night. This was looked on as a kind opening of Providence. I shall only say, that though it was a situation far from being calculated to promote my spiritual improvement and growth in grace, I honorably fulfilled my engagement, and acted faithfully while in my uncle's service: yet, when my time expired, and though he knew that I could do my work as well as any man he had in his service, he refused to employ me. This we looked on as being cruel and ungrateful, and tended greatly to discourage me. My uncle resembled Jacob's; greedy and grasping, and prone to take the advantage. But there was this important difference between Jacob's case and mine, namely, that when Jacob left his uncle, he returned home wealthy, whereas when I left mine and went away to sojourn among strangers, and steer my course through the world, I was poor and much cast down. Harsh treatment coming from strangers or enemies can be more easily endured, than when it comes from near relatives or professed friends. Even the holy human soul of our blessed Redeemer felt this, and complained of it, when he said; "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, who did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me." If we would only attentively observe the movements of Providence, we would find that what our enemies intend for evil, like Joseph's brethren, the Lord overrules for our good.

My not obtaining employment in my native place was the means of causing me leave it, and push my way among strangers. With the consent of my parents I made up my mind to go to Arbroath, a populous town some twelve miles distant, to seek employment; not without many fears as to the result. Accordingly I took my departure in a lumber wagon, with a small bundle carefully made up

by the hand of one of the most devoted and affectionate mothers that ever breathed the breath of life, consisting of a clean shirt, one pair of woolen stockings, and a Bible; together with about two dollars, one third of which I had to pay for my ride. It is not the amount of money young men receive, when they first set out in the world, that does them the most good; for it would have been better for many if they had started poor, and been put on their own shifts; then they would have learned some of the lessons I learned, the benefits of which I have found in all the places I have been, and in all the various relations and stations I have occupied. When I went to Arbroath, I fell into employment with an honest, religious man, who proved a friend and a father to me; and with whom I lived a year very happily. Here I was now in the midst of strangers, but under the care of Him who is "the stranger's shield." It was in that place, under the directions of God, that my mind as to spiritual matters underwent a change for the better; and where sentiments were imbibed, and habits formed, which in after years became more confirmed and matured, and which to the present time still remain with me. It is, generally, the first step a young man takes when he leaves home, and the companions he then makes choice of, that tend to form his character, either for good or bad, during life. Young persons who have been brought up in the fear of God cannot therefore be too careful of the companions they make choice of when they go from home; for youthful impressions made either for good or evil will, in all probability, cling to them for life. The earlier in the spring the seed is sown, the deeper root it takes: so also, the spring time of youth is the time to have the seed of truth and true godliness sown in the heart, which will make their appearance in after life. "They who walk with wise men shall be wise, but the companion of fools shall be destroyed."—"I love them that love me, and they who seek me early shall find me."

In Arbroath I met with kind friends, who took an interest in me, because they saw me to be industrious, honest, and given to observe the Lord's day. It was there, also, where I first became acquainted with the Seceders, whose place of worship I regularly attended. Though they were a sect every where spoken against, because they were more

rigid in their discipline, and more strict in the admission of members to their communion, than other denominations, and because they tormented those who dwelt in "the Auld Kirk," and in the Burgher and Relief churches, with their testimony, which they lifted up against their latitudinarian sentiments and practices; yet I found the excellent ones of the earth dwelt among them. Their ministers were generally men of profound learning; pious, faithful, and diligent; with Zion's purity, peace, and prosperity lying near their hearts. They were wise observers of the signs of the times (not dumb dogs who would not bark); and were always prepared to answer with accuracy the question put by the earnest inquirer,—“Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?” Their people then were well acquainted with the Scriptures, and the principles of their own and other churches in the land, and were able to give a reason for the hope that was in them, as well as why they preferred their own denomination to any other. They were not like many who take up a profession without understanding what it is, and therefore soon drop it and fall in with another; but they sat down, counted the cost, informed their minds as to its nature and consequences, and then held it fast conscientiously and fearlessly. It was during the early periods of the Secession Church's history of which it could with propriety be said, that she had “put on her beautiful garments, and looked forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible to her enemies as an army with banners.” Though upwards of half a century has passed away since I first became acquainted with her doctrines, discipline, and government, as founded on the Scriptures and held forth in her Testimony, yet I still love them, and earnestly pray that the God of our fathers would raise up faithful witnesses who shall maintain them, and hand them down, pure and untainted, to generations yet unborn. “Arise, O Lord, and plead the cause which is thine own!”

After having been a year in the above mentioned place, he in whose employment I was, informed me in a friendly manner, that I had learned all he could show me, and that it would be in my favor to seek some other place where I could receive more information as to my trade, and obtain

better wages. This put me rather to a stand; not knowing what I could do, or where I could go. But He of whom I asked counsel opened a door for me, and led me in ways I knew not, and caused light to arise on my path. I had a sister of my father living in Edinburgh, to whom I wrote, inquiring whether she thought I could obtain employment there; and whether I could board with her. She wrote me an encouraging letter. I accordingly left the place where I had spent many happy days and found many kind friends; sailed for Leith in a small sloop (for in those days there were no steamboats); and arrived in Edinburgh, with more experience of the world, more established in the faith once delivered to the saints, and with better clothing and more money to pay my way than when I left home a year before. This was in the spring of 1815, before the battle of Waterloo, when trade of every kind was brisk. Men were scarce, and wages very high. I got immediately into employment with a good man, an elder in Dr. Jamieson's church (Seceder), who carried on an extensive business in Prince's street, in the New Town; often employing from twenty to thirty men. He soon discovered that I was sober, industrious, and did my work well; and that I did not fall in with those around me who drank beer, and whiskey, and porter, both secretly at their work, and regularly at the tavern at night. This caused him put more confidence in me, and show me more favors, than some of the rest. At this they became displeased, and, like Joseph's brethren, did all they could to discourage me and drive me out of their way; by calling me a mean, greedy, long-faced Seceder, because I would not go along with them in the evenings to the tavern. But they, by degrees, found out that neither threatenings nor abusive language could drive me away from the shop, or turn me from my purpose not to drink with them, nor make any of them my companions; and they soon let me alone. Some of my bitterest enemies became my warmest friends; and expressed a wish that they could only follow my example, for they were persuaded it would be far better both for their purse and person. "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." We have a striking instance of this in the case of Joseph, who was young, and in the midst of strangers



and bitter enemies: "The Lord was with him; and that which he did the Lord made it to prosper." This should greatly encourage young persons to resolve not to be laughed out of their religion by scoffers; or be driven from the path of duty by threatenings, or drawn away by enticements. "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." In these circumstances, they should resist the devil and those who are in his service, rather than tamper with them, or yield for the sake of either peace or profit; and they shall find it far more to their advantage. Let them say what Joseph said,—“Oh, how can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?”

After having been five years in the same place with my good friend Mr. W., I found my health giving way, arising from the close confinement and long hours, from six in the morning to seven in the evening, both summer and winter. It was evident that if I did not soon turn myself to some other employment, and obtain more exercise in the open air, I could not, to all human appearance, stand it very long. Besides, I became tired of the company and ungodly conversation of those with whom I was necessitated to associate; and I earnestly and frequently prayed that God would open up some way for me, in which I could have more time to improve my mind, and enjoy the company of those who were of my own way of thinking and acting.

I embraced what opportunities I had to obtain information, by attending a prayer meeting every week, and taking my turn in the exercises. I had connected myself with the Associate Anti-Burgher congregation, Potter Row, then under the pastoral care of the Rev. Mr. Simpson; a very evangelical and impressive preacher: and thus I became acquainted with many a good and intelligent man in prayer meetings and other places, which was of great benefit to me in after life when I had to pray and speak in public. Such meetings for prayer and conference are, if properly conducted, excellent theological seminaries, to which if students of divinity were to pay more attention, they would not only find benefit to themselves, but they would also be better prepared rightly to divide the Word of truth, and give every one his portion of meat in due season. I also, during one winter, attended a course



of lectures on Anatomy, delivered by the celebrated Dr. Barclay, in Surgeon Square, from six to seven in the evening; from which I derived a great deal of useful information. By attending these and other lectures, I did not, however, neglect my work. When the evening came on which I had to attend them, I was the more diligent during the day, and left my business an hour before any of the other hands; and I was sure to be an hour earlier than they in the morning, and was far more refreshed and active than some of them, who had continued at their cups, songs, and cards until midnight. Such practices as these, which many follow, may be agreeable to corrupt nature in the meantime, but in the end, and perhaps before that time, they "will bite as doth a serpent and sting as doth an adder." "The end of these things is death." Few if any who follow those evil ways "return again, neither take they hold of the path of life." May none of you, my young friends, be found among such characters!

As I never had any intention of taking a regular course in Anatomy or Surgery, and had not the money to pay for a regular ticket, I became acquainted with the door keeper, told him my circumstances, and offered him a small sum, if he would let me in along with the other students to hear the lectures. To this he consented on the express condition, that I should not come up stairs and enter the room with my crutch, as the Doctor would detect me as being an intruder, he having no student among the three hundred and upwards who wore such an appendage. Rather than lose the lecture, I concluded to conceal my crutch in a certain place at the bottom of the stair outside, and walk in with a cane. This I continued to do for most of the winter, without ever being discovered; but on coming down stairs one evening, and going to take hold of my old friend, (my crook in my lot,) it was gone, I knew not where. I found out that some of the wild wags had discovered where I concealed it, and had run away with it, to make sport for themselves and others. I made out to get home without it; and from that day to this I have made out to get through the world with the help of a hand staff or cane only.

## CHAPTER II.

FROM MY BECOMING A STUDENT AND ENTERING COLLEGE, TO  
MY SETTLEMENT AT CROSSHILL IN AYRSHIRE AS TEACHER  
OF THE SCHOOL ENDOWED BY ELIAS CATHCART, ESQ.

Doubt and perplexity as to my future means of support if I should abandon my trade and become a student—Opened a school—Commenced the study of Latin and Greek—Entered College—The course of studies—Trials and difficulties as to my means of Living—Was present at the union of the Burgher and Anti-Burgher churches—The scene described—The Protestors and their sentiments in regard to that union—Joined myself to the Protestors—The Protestors start a church in Edinburgh, with Rev. Professor Paxton as Pastor—which greatly flourished—His high character as a Preacher—Commencement of the Theological Seminary of the General Associate Synod, with Mr. Paxton as Professor—Entered the Theological Seminary—Found the benefits of my exercises in prayer-meetings, etc.—Continued straitened circumstances—Consequent anxiety and despondency—Remarkable Providential opening and deliverance from these—Entered into a three years' engagement to teach Mr. Cathcart's school in Ayrshire—Arrived at the house of Dr. George Stevenson—His great kindness to me—Reached Crosshill, my destination—Its neighborhood the scenes of persecution of the Covenanters—Their tomb-stones still to be seen among the hills and solitary glens—My emotions in my frequent visits to their graves—These visits confirmed my love to the principles of the Reformation for which they suffered.

NEVER in any former period was I more at a loss what to do than at that time. To remain much longer in the situation I then was would endanger my health; and my spiritual improvement and comfort in the company of my fellow-workmen were almost at an end. But how I could give up my present calling—the only way providence had given me to make a living—and take up some other means of support, I knew not. I was then twenty years of age; had made out to clear my own way and assist my parents, who stood much in need of assistance; but I had nothing over. I was poor and friendless,

and not in good health. I had wealthy relations, both in Edinburgh and in Montrose, who could have assisted me to obtain an education, but they would not; partly because I was connected with the Seceders, whom they disliked, but principally, because they were of the same opinion with others, that I never would succeed if I should give up my trade, and follow learning, and therefore they should never be remunerated. It was true, I found many students, belonging both to the Establishment and Secession, who had come to Edinburgh poor and friendless, and who pushed their way by teaching, attended College and afterwards the Theological Hall, and at last obtained license to preach the gospel at home, or who went to America or some distant land; but before they began to teach, they had themselves been taught either in academies or in parish schools, or both, before they came to the city, and therefore were well grounded and prepared to teach others; whereas I was lamentably deficient; could only read and write moderately well; but knew scarcely any thing about Arithmetic, Grammar, or Geography. After asking counsel and direction from above, and deliberating the matter fully, as I thought, I concluded to break off, and launch my frail bark on the ocean, without helm, chart, or compass. A hazardous undertaking! And although I succeeded far beyond my own expectations, or that of any who knew me; yet I would never recommend any to try the same experiment, and to be tossed and dashed with the merciless billows and cross winds of adversity, unless they should be better prepared to steer their course and encounter dangers, than I was. But when there is a strong irrepressible desire existing in the mind, to be useful in the church, and to promote His glory who has "revealed his Son in them, and called them by his grace," let them not be discouraged or give up hope, though the sky for a time may be dark and lowering and the winds and waves may be contrary. Let them trust in their blessed Redeemer, who can come at the darkest hour in the night, when the dangers are at their height, and say to the troubled sea,—“Peace, be still!” and immediately there will be a calm. Their beginnings may be small, and their dangers may be many, like mine, but, through the blessing of the God of Jacob, their latter end may greatly increase. Where God intends to lead us, he can open up a way for us.

But to resume my narrative. I thought if I could only contrive some way by which I could do something to support myself, however pinchingly, and could have opportunity to improve myself in those branches of which I was deficient, then I might have the prospect of being better qualified to instruct others in due time. I accordingly rented a room in Buccleuch street; furnished it in a rough manner; and hung out my sign as a teacher of young children. I met with as much encouragement the first few months as could have been expected. I applied myself diligently to learn, and embraced every opportunity to qualify myself more for my profession, so that before a year expired I was as well qualified for teaching the common branches as some others who had earlier advantages, and began to infer from the encouragement Providence had given me, that I should take courage and persevere in prosecuting my education for the ministry, however much I was embarrassed for means, and however dark and discouraging the prospect still was. My health by exercise became greatly improved, although my meals (mostly of oatmeal and milk, with sometimes a loaf of wheat bread,) were not very sumptuous, nor my clothing any of the finest or most fashionable. In the midst of all my poverty, I felt happy and thankful that I could choose my companions, and attend to religious duties. I was like a bird which, after having been long confined in a cage, was set at liberty to fly in the open air.

I commenced the study of Latin and Greek with a private teacher, and was at it late at night and early in the morning; so that, when the second winter came round, I was prepared to enter the Junior classes in College; to attend which I had to make my school hours correspond, which caused many of my scholars leave me. Preparing my lessons for college and attending my school at the same time, I found to be very laborious both for body and mind, and very much to impede my progress. My first year was the worst. The second and third years, with Logic, Mathematics, Chemistry, and Moral Philosophy, were much more easy and agreeable. While some who were neither pinched with poverty nor perplexed and exhausted by teaching, and who had youth on their side, were devoting the whole of their time to their studies, and laying up a

foundation for future usefulness; I, along with many others whose education had been neglected in youth, was lagging behind, striving against wind and tide, and struggling to keep my head above water; the consequences of which were felt in after years. "Some," says the proverb, "are born with a silver spoon in their mouth, and others with a wooden ladle." While some are gliding smoothly and pleasantly down the tide of time, without meeting with any interruptions; others are encountering one storm on the back of another. All these are appointed and overruled by Him, "who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working." If we are among the called according to His purpose, every wave which He sends is calculated to waft our frail bark the more quickly forward to the haven of everlasting rest, where tempests never beat, nor billows roar.

While I was attending college, the basis of union between the Burgher and Anti-Burgher churches was published, and caused much discussion throughout the land, both from the pulpit and from the press. I read much on both sides of the question. My school-house being convenient to the places where both Synods held their meetings, I attended their debates, and had good opportunity for obtaining information. I was present in the General Associate Synod on the memorable night before they were to drop their Testimony, meet their Burgher brethren, and form one united body. Long, earnest, and animated were the speeches that were made that night, both for and against the union; no small commotion, at times, existed among them. Some of those who were the most bitter opponents of it, were its warmest friends next day, and were found marching in the front rank. Both Synods met at their respective places, constituted and marched in a body, two and two, to Dr. Pedie's church; and there joined hands, sang, prayed, and chose Rev. Mr. Greig of Lochgellie as Moderator, being the oldest member present, who constituted the United church.

Those whose minds were made up I remember of seeing, the night before the General Associate Synod threw up their testimony, coming forward deeply impressed and much overcome with the prospect of what was to take place on the morrow. It was late at night when the vote

was taken, which showed a large majority for union; when Dr. Stevenson of Ayr, (Author of "The Necessity of the Atonement" and of "The Offices of Christ," etc.,) along with a few others, came to the bar of the Synod and solemnly protested against it, in their own names and in the names of all those who should now or afterwards adhere to them. During that solemn scene the most profound silence prevailed in the house, many both among the members and the audience shedding tears. The protestors maintained, that by uniting on the Basis, the Synod evidently gave up the Testimony of 1804, which they were bound to hold fast by their ordination vows, and to hand down unimpaired to posterity; thus relinquishing the ground occupied by their fathers of the Secession: and they claimed the right to continue to exercise their ministry, and to maintain the principles and constitution of the General Associate Synod. They asserted, that by a union taking place on the proposed basis, a wide door would be opened for the introduction of latitudinarian sentiments and practices on Communion and Psalmody. Many lamentable evidences of the truth of these assertions have taken place since that time; among which are to be reckoned the union with the Relief Synod, and the adopting and making use of a book in the praises of God, containing three hundred hymns. May these things be a warning to other churches not to be desirous of leaving the good old way in which their fathers walked and found peace to their souls, lest "Ichabod, the glory is departed from Israel," be written on them!

The Union, of which I was an eye witness, while it afforded to some joy and gladness, and was by them looked upon as the dawning of the latter day glory of the church, when "the wolf and the lamb shall lie down together;" was to others in the land who trembled for the ark of God, matter of lamentation. These were convinced that she who was formerly terrible as an army with banners, had become weak, exposed to every attack from her enemies. It was said, "Judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off; for truth has fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter." I never had clearness to enter the Union, though many of my acquaintance had—believing it to be dropping a testimony for the doctrines of the



Reformation, as witnessed for by the early fathers of the Secession Church. I had fully made up my mind to join with the Protestors, and do what I could to uphold the "banner given to be displayed because of the truth." While some of my most intimate fellow students who belonged to the same church and attended the same prayer meetings, and went through the same classes at college as I did, went into the Union, where they thought a wider field was opened for them and a more popular church; where the loaves and the fishes were in more abundance; I, through divine assistance, chose rather to cast in my lot among the few faithful and despised Protestors; and I had never any reason to repent of it.

It was some time after the Union took place before the Protestors met in a formal manner, and declared what was to be their future course. This left many of their friends at a loss to know what to do. This was the case with many in Edinburgh and Leith. We had no minister in these places, as all went into the Union. It was therefore agreed, to request Professor Paxton, who lived in the city, but who in consequence of not going into the Union had been put out of his office as teacher of Theology, to preach for us; to which he cheerfully consented. A place of worship was procured for him in the Grass Market, and the first day he preached, it was crowded to overflowing. His text was,—“My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions’ mouths, that they have not hurt me.” Dan. vi. 22. The number of those who adhered to him increased so much, that they erected a large and elegant meeting house in the centre of the old town, which was always filled with an attentive audience. He continued their faithful pastor until the day of his death, which took place in 1833. Perhaps no one ever walked more uprightly, or was more devoted to his Master’s service, or was more esteemed as a gentleman, a scholar, and an able and eloquent preacher of the gospel. He was admired wherever he preached, both in the city and in the country; and never failed to collect an audience. He had a fluent, earnest, animated, and accurate manner, in delivering his discourses; which were always of an evangelical nature, full of Christ and Him crucified. The most important of his published works was one in three volumes, titled,

“Illustrations of the Holy Scriptures, in three parts; I. From the geography of the East. II. From the natural history of the East. III. From the customs and manners of ancient and modern nations.” He was a kind friend to me, both when I was a student and a preacher.

The Theological Seminary, or what in Scotland is called “The Divinity Hall,” met in Mr. Paxton’s house, and then consisted of only six students, myself being one of the number. This was a great change to Professor Paxton, for when he was Professor of the General Associate Synod, he often had attending his lectures upwards of one hundred and fifty students, many of whom came from Ireland. We all found him fatherly, kind, and accommodating; although he was at the sametime rigid in his discipline, and kept us attending to our duty.

It was then I found the benefit of having accustomed myself to pray and speak in the presence of others, and of having made myself familiar with my Bible, Boston’s Fourfold State, Fisher’s Catechism, and Watson’s Body of Divinity. Professor Paxton taught Hebrew in the winter; in which I made more progress than in some of my other studies, and got ahead of the other students, though they surpassed me in Greek and Latin, they having been learning these languages when I was working hard to make a living and assist my parents. None all my life could say of me what Festus said to Paul,—“Much learning hath made thee mad.”

At that stage of my studies I still held on to the school; but I found my income insufficient to clear my way, and keep myself in respectable clothing and lodgings. This caused me to be often cast down and discouraged; so much so, that I was asked if I was well, for I looked sad and melancholy. No one can form any adequate idea of the state of mind in which one is found, who wishes to live honestly and respectably before the world, and yet can see no way by which it can be accomplished, unless he has experienced it. I never complained to man in my straits, as I knew of none who would relieve me; and because, if they should, I had no prospect of repaying them. At this crisis, as well as at previous and subsequent times, God made light to arise, and opened a door for me which no one was able to shut. My kind friend Professor Paxton

having heard that Elias Cathcart, Esquire, son of Lord Alloway, was making inquiry after a young man to teach a school which he was to establish on his Estate in Ayrshire for the benefit of his feuers and farmers, sent for me, and said to me, that if I would go without delay and make application, he would give me a letter of introduction and recommendation. I fixed myself up as well as I could, like Joseph when he was to appear before Pharaoh, (although my outer garments were thread bare, yet I always endeavored to keep myself as neat and clean as possible;) and called on Mr. Cathcart, who lived in a spacious mansion in the New Town; presented my letter; and was kindly entertained, and treated in a Christian manner, as if I had been his equal. He explained where he proposed to commence his school, what he wanted taught in it, and how much he would give the teacher. I agreed to his terms; which were that I should sign a bond to teach for three years the common branches taught in country schools, and also should teach a Sabbath-school; for which I was to receive from him \$200, a free house and garden, and all the fees I could raise from the scholars; with permission to have seven weeks of a vacation, so that I could attend the Theological Seminary at Edinburgh. Though Mr. Cathcart and family were members of the Established Church, yet they hated patronage, and the domineering spirit of many of her ministers in matters both civil and religious; and he therefore enjoined me never to let any of the members of the Presbytery have any management in the school: and if they interfered with me, to let him know, and he would make them suffer for it. This was greatly in my favor, as I afterwards found. The hand of God in all this was most conspicuously displayed; for, while numbers of students who had completed their collegiate course were waiting in Edinburgh and looking out for situations, who were far more suitable both in body and mind than I was, they could not take out of my lap that which was disposed of to me by His love and mercy, who works according to the counsel of his own will. "If God be for us who can be against us?"

I set out for Ayrshire, in good spirits; Mr. C. paying my expenses on the stage all the way, (in those days there were no rail-roads; this was in 1825). I landed in the

house of my good friend and spiritual father Dr. George Stevenson; to whose table, library, and family I was always made welcome during my stay in that part of the country, and from whom I derived much important information. Crosshill was the name of the village in which I taught, in the Parish of Kirkmichael, twelve miles from the town of Ayr, and three from Maybole, through which passed the pleasant water of Girvan. The village was composed principally of weavers, mechanics, and day-laborers. The country around was beautiful, healthy, and in a high state of cultivation. It was one of the many memorable places in the west of Scotland in which the advocates of despotism hunted the true friends of Christ like wild beasts, and cut them down in the open fields without mercy, during the persecuting times of Dalziel and the bloody Grahame of Claverhouse.

Often have I wandered on the hills and solitary glens, and examined with feelings of awe the long gray moss covered stones, beneath which lay the ashes of those who died for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ; and I always returned with a stronger attachment to the Reformation cause, and stronger resolutions to do what I could to uphold it. "The memory of the just is blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot." This has been fulfilled, both as it respects the persecutors and the persecuted: the former are despised by all right thinking and well-informed persons; while the latter are esteemed in all parts of the world, and will be held in everlasting remembrance. "And I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying; How long O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"

## CHAPTER III.

FROM MY SETTLEMENT AS SCHOOLMASTER AT CROSSHILL TO MY  
BEING LICENSED TO PREACH THE GOSPEL.

My school at Crosshill—Its prosperity—Religious state of the neighborhood—Attended Rev. Dr. Stevenson's church in Ayr—Beautiful scenery—Places celebrated by the Poet Burns in his poem of Tam o' Shanter—Spiritual ignorance of the people of Crosshill—Opened a religious meeting on Sabbath evenings for their instruction—Opposition of Satan and his servants—In which they were signally foiled—Unexpected call to prepare for entering on the ministry of the Gospel—Left Crosshill—Trial discourses for licensure—Licensed to preach.

AT Crosshill, I had one of the best lighted, largest, and best furnished school houses in that part of the country; the proprietor sparing no cost to make every thing suitable. It had a large bell hung in a belfry, which was rung to collect the scholars, both on working days and Sabbath evenings. I got into comfortable and respectable boarding. I began with a few scholars at very low fees, which they paid every Monday morning; but the number soon increased to between 70 and 80 during the week, and on the Sabbath evenings there were upwards of a hundred at certain seasons of the year. What tended greatly to increase the number of my scholars and gain the attention of the community was, the deep interest Mr. Cathcart and his Lady took in having the young educated, and the evidences of this they gave in erecting a school house, sending out and supporting a teacher, supplying the scholars with slates, books, paper, pens and ink, besides sending numbers of Bibles, Psalm-books, Catechisms, and Tracts, to be distributed either gratuitously or at a very small price, as I should think proper. This had a great influence in bringing me and my school into notice. I was looked on as a

person of no small importance and influence (little did they know my origin or my defects,) brought all the way from the great city of Edinburgh, at the instance and acting under the authority of Elias Cathcart, Esq., of Blairstone Castle and Crosshill, and protected by him. I never was before in a situation of so great importance and responsibility, or in which I was so comfortable and so much respected; but I trust I endeavoured to act a prudent and faithful part, and not to forget the Lord's goodness in placing me there, in the midst of so many mercies. This shows that we should never despair of deliverance from trouble. "Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."—"Commit thy way to the Lord; "trust also in him: and He shall bring it to pass."

In my new situation, I soon began to feel the want of the religious society to which I was accustomed in Edinburgh. We were three miles from the Parish church, to which few if any ever went; the Pastor being a rank Socinian in his sentiments, and in his practice a lover of wine and strong drink, many lamentable instances of which I saw, when he came to our village. The patron had put him in, and it was almost impossible to get him and other such like characters out of the church in those days. At Maybole there was a diligent, evangelical minister in the Parish church, and a Burgher minister also; but for peace, as well as for conscience sake, I never went near any of them. Dr. Stevenson, of whose congregation I was a member, was twelve miles distant. I got a pony of my own, and I commonly went to Ayr on Saturday afternoon when the school was dismissed, and returned half way after sermon, and stopped at Blairstone Castle over night, and reached home in time for school on Monday morning. I could only go occasionally however, as my engagements bound me to attend to the Sabbath-school. The road I travelled to and from Ayr in summer was among the most beautiful in Scotland, being along the "banks of bonnie Doon," and other places rendered classic by Robert Burns. I had to pass the humble thatch-roofed house in which Scotland's best poet was born; into which I sometimes went, and had a talk with one of his old cronies, who kept the house, and who had many anecdotes to tell about him.



I had also to pass "the cairn, whar' the hunter fand the murdered bairn;" and "the well whar' Mungo's mither hanged hersel':" also "the Auld Alloway Kirk," where Tam O'Shanter got such a fright, the witches coming out on him in such a fury, and to escape whose clutches he urged on his mare Meg to "win the Keystane o' the brig," that is, the old bridge that spanned the Doon; which once passed, he would be in safety, since, as the popular belief ran, witches and evil spirits had no power to follow a poor wight for harm any further than the middle of the next running stream!

The people among whom my lot was cast were generally very ignorant in spiritual things, none having cared for their souls, nor attended to their religious education, or that of their children. I felt deeply for them, and often wished I could devise some way by which I could assemble the grown up persons together, and get them to engage in religious exercises, that it might, by the divine blessing, be for their benefit. At last I concluded that I would meet with them every Sabbath evening when the school was dismissed, and engage in Praise and Prayer, explain a Question in the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, and then conclude as I commenced. This was the beginning of no small labor to myself; and at one time was like to bring me into difficulty with the Presbytery to which I was subordinate, through the instrumentality of certain envious, designing persons. I continued these meetings regularly during the winter, and usually had the house filled with an orderly, attentive audience. I endeavoured to prepare myself during the week, and on Sabbath when not from home, by reading Fisher, Vincent, and Boston, on the Assembly's Shorter Catechism; by which means I informed myself on those doctrines which I tried to explain to others. I had great liberty in the exercises, both in praying and speaking; and I had good reason to believe that my labors among them were not altogether in vain.

But while every thing was going on well, and all were seemingly interested and satisfied, the enemy of souls stirred up certain of his friends to do what they could to sow discord, and break up our meetings. If we are only pleased with an outward form in religion, and do not try to promote the spiritual kingdom of Christ, the good of



our own souls, and that of others, the devil will let us alone and not disturb our false peace; but as soon as he finds us doing any thing to inroach on his kingdom, we may rest satisfied, he will cast dust in our eyes, or bring us into trouble by some means or other. The Parish minister who should have rejoiced to see me doing what I could to instruct his parishoners whose eternal interests he had neglected, became mad against us, and openly declared I was keeping conventicles, in which heresy and damnable doctrines were taught; and said that he would head a few some evening and break us up. This, however, he did not attempt, and it was well for him he did not. He asserted that I was "preaching Secederism;" and that since I began, fewer than before came near the Kirk. Moreover, our Burgher brother in Maybole also took the alarm, and became afraid I was drawing away some of *his* sheep from his fold, and that it was my intention to lead them in among the Protestors; than which nothing was further from my mind. It seems, though they could not shut up our "conventicles," they tried another method, which appeared at first to be more successful; which was, to tell Rev. Dr. Stevenson that his student at Crosshill was carrying on preaching regularly every Sabbath evening, and ought to be stopped by Presbytery, as he had not got his license. Not knowing any thing of the false and malicious reports that were industriously circulated to injure my usefulness and perplex me and others, I called on Dr. Stevenson as usual; when I discovered he was concerned about something which I was disposed to believe had a reference to me. He took me aside, and told me what he had heard about me preaching; and wished to know if it were true. I told him what I had done, and what were my reasons for commencing these evening meetings, and all about how they were conducted and attended, and how Mr. K. the Parish minister had treated me: when the good aged man of God put his hand on my head and said,—“Persevere, my lad, and do all the good you can among the folk in that destitute region; be not terrified by your adversaries, and God will bless you for it.” I continued these meetings without molestation all the time I was there, without asking from the people either fee or reward.

Things went on very encouragingly; and I lived comfortably, and usefully, and became more and more respected by the community; and I felt thankful that I had a home, and the prospect of remaining in it for years to come. But alas! how shortsighted we are! and how changeable is every situation in which we find ourselves in this world! While I was consoling myself with being in a safe and convenient harbor, events were brought about over which I had no control, which caused me to loose from my moorings, face the storms, and steer in a course of which I knew nothing of the dangers and difficulties, and for which I was ill prepared. The union between Dr. McCrie's body, known as the Constitutional Presbytery, and the Protestors, or Associate Synod to which I belonged, had taken place, and the united body was known by the name of "The Original Seceders." This union caused a demand for more preachers to supply the vacancies, most of which were small and far removed from each other; and Synod agreed to take three students on trial for license, and I was one of the number, having been three Sessions at the Theological Seminary. This put me more about than any thing I had met with for a long time. I told them very plainly that I had a year to remain where I was, according to my engagement; and therefore could not comply with their request: but, in order to remove that objection, Professor Paxton called on Mr. Cathcart, and told him that if he would let me go, he would send another of his students to take my place, who would carry out the same plans which I had followed. This succeeded, and I was under the unpleasant necessity of complying. I was exceedingly sorry to leave the place where I was so comfortable, where I had so many friends, and where God in his providence had blessed me with so much countenance. It was rather a sorrowful parting to my scholars, to the people, and to myself; and in going away, I cast many a longing, lingering look behind. Since that time the Estate has fallen into other hands; the number of inhabitants has greatly increased; two fine churches have been erected, with two able ministers, one belonging to the Free Church, the other to the Established; with Sabbath and Day schools; and there are also cotton factories in operation. Such is the transitory nature of things in this world,

I went into Ayr and remained in Dr. Stevenson's house; where I had access to his library, and experienced much kindness from him and the family. I there prepared my trial discourses for license; which I delivered at a meeting of Presbytery held at Kilwinning, on a Monday after the Sacrament. This was a very solemn and impressive occasion to me, and produced such effects on both my body and mind, as rendered me almost unfit for any thing. I scarcely knew where I was or what I was doing for some time. My trial discourses were approved, and I received license. Thus the Lord, who had hitherto helped me and delivered me from many dangers, exceeding my hopes and disappointing my fears, opened a way for me by which I could serve him in the ministry of the Gospel of his Son. It was evidently a convincing proof of His sovereign grace and mercy, in passing by many of my early companions, who to all human appearance were more likely to be useful in his church than I, who was poor, lame, friendless, and well advanced in years: but so it seemed good in His sight! He often chooses the weak things of this world to confound the strong, and the foolish to confound the wise, that none may glory in His presence.

## CHAPTER IV.

FROM MY COMMENCING TO PREACH IN SCOTLAND, TILL I  
LANDED IN NEW YORK.

Preached throughout Scotland and in the north of Ireland—  
Hardships that we preachers endured—Death of my father—  
Resolved to emigrate to America—Preached in Edinburgh  
and Glasgow my farewell sermons—Sailed for New York—  
First storm at sea—A second and terrific sea-storm—Preach-  
ing at sea—Beauty of New York bay—Arrived safe at New  
York.

I PREACHED my first Sermon in public after license, in my old school-house at Cross-hill, from Gen. iii. 13,—“What is this that thou hast done?” When I began preaching, I was much troubled with a slavish fear of man, which embarrassed me much, but by experience it wore away. The vacancies were weak, and their distance from each other was great, which caused us have a great deal of travelling backward and forward. This was performed either on horse-back or stage-coach, as railroads were not then in operation. This caused much labour, and afforded little time for studying new discourses; so that the few barley loaves and small fishes I carried about with me soon became used up, and there was little opportunity of having others put in their place. However, I tried to do what I could to sustain the cause for which our fathers appeared in opposition to the enemy who was coming in like a flood: though at times I was not a little discouraged with the dark prospect of obtaining any thing like a comfortable settlement; but in this I do not know that I was worse than other preachers who were exposed to the same

hardships. We were often very poorly paid for our labour; scarcely able at times to make our income meet our outlay; and very often had poor and unsuitable accommodations: but I had been accustomed to these things in former times, and therefore did not take so ill with them as some who were brought up in affluence. Though the people were few and generally poor to whom we had to preach, yet they were pious, intelligent, and strongly attached to their profession; to maintain which they were exposed to reproach and persecution. When we knew this, it made us put up with many inconveniences. I had been in most of the counties of Scotland preaching, as far north as John o' Groat's House, in Thurso, Wick, and the Orkney Isles; also a month in the north of Ireland, where I had the pleasure of walking on the walls of Derry and on the Giants' Causeway. I also preached occasionally in the cities or towns of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Perth, Dundee, Arbroath, Montrose, and Aberdeen—with what acceptance it is not for me to say. I did what I could to preach Christ and Him crucified, not in fine rounded periods and words of man's wisdom, but in "sound speech that could not be condemned."

Rather better than a year after I began to preach, my father died in Montrose, (my mother had died in Aberdeen eight years before that;) notice of which event reached me on a Sabbath morning when I was preaching by appointment at Midholm, the congregation of which Mr. Arnot was formerly Pastor; who and Mr. Gelletly were the first missionaries sent to America in 1754 by the General Associate Synod. That afternoon I preached from Hosea xiv. 3,—“In Thee the fatherless findeth mercy.” Little did I know that I was then fatherless; or that so many things I was saying to others were applicable to myself. I left for Montrose on Monday morning, expecting to be in time for the funeral; but it was over before I reached that place. I went to the grave-yard and saw where they had laid the earthly remains of him who always took a deep interest in me, and did what lay in his power to encourage me and direct me in the ways of

God. I shed a tear of memory o'er his narrow bed; and expressed a hope that we should meet each other in the same blessed company in the morning of the resurrection. Children should think much of, and be kind unto their parents while they are with them, for they may soon have to part with them. A sister and myself were all who were left of the family. I got her into a situation in Mr. Cathcart's family, where she found herself comfortable. When in Montrose, I called on some of my fashionable and wealthy aunts and cousins (my uncle with whom I had learned my trade was now gone to another world), and I could not but observe how differently they treated me than formerly they did when I was done with my apprenticeship and under the necessity of leaving my father's house to seek a living among strangers. Thrice happy are they, whether they be old or young, who do not need to depend on relations!

I had a desire, when I was attending college, if I succeeded, to go to America, as I thought I could have more courage and success among strangers; and this desire became stronger after my father's death. He was opposed to my leaving my native land, and I did not feel disposed to act contrary to his wishes; but now I could no more hurt his feelings if I should follow out my inclinations in this respect. Accordingly I gave notice to the Synod at their meeting in May 1831 that it was my intention, Providence permitting, to go to America in the course of a few months; and the clerk was instructed to furnish me with a certificate. This he accordingly did. Having got my affairs arranged as well as I could, and having made some purchases of books, and obtained many substantial evidences of respect from well-wishers of myself and of the country whither I was going,\* it was arranged that I should preach on the Sabbath immediately before my departure, in Dr. Paxton's church in Edinburgh in the forenoon, and in Dr. McCrie's in the afternoon; which I accordingly did, and for which I received a

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\*See the Appendix.



handsome present in order to assist in paying my passage across the Atlantic.

This was a very memorable period of my life. A few years before, I went to that great city a poor stranger seeking for a day's work; without any one to aid me, and without knowing the face of a single individual (except my aunt) amongst the many thousands that dwelt there: yet the Lord had opened up for me a way, far beyond my own expectations, or those of others, by which I was put into the ministry, and permitted to preach in the pulpits of two of the most learned and popular Ministers of Edinburgh. "This was the Lord's doing" and none of mine, and was "wondrous in the eyes" of all who were acquainted with me. I mention these things in order to record the goodness and mercy of God to a poor, helpless, unworthy creature: also for the encouragement of some humble inquirer after knowledge who may be groping his way in the dark, and struggling against wind and tide. Let such "trust in God" and "be of good courage;" and "He will lead them in ways they know not, and in paths that they have not trode." They must fight their way, and "endure hardships as good soldiers of Jesus Christ;" learn to put on their armour, and to "keep their powder dry." Edinburgh, above all the places I have been in, is the one to which my heart turns with the most pleasant recollections, and it will continue so to be till life's setting day. There I passed ten years, the most important period of my life; during which I endured many hardships and underwent many changes. There I acquired a wide circle of friends and acquaintances who were among God's hidden ones and true friends; with whom I had sweet fellowship and communion in the House of God, in the prayer-meetings, and in our more private intercourse both in houses and in our frequent walks along by Holy-rood House (the palace of the ancient Kings of Scotland), the King's Park, Arthur's Seat, Salisbury Crags, Samson's Ribs, St. Anthony's Well, &c. There I obtained what little learning I got, classical and theological; and there, along with ministers, elders, students, and a large num-



ber of other persons male and female, with my right hand lifted up I vowed, in the presence of God, angels, and men, that I would be faithful in appearing for and abiding by the Reformation cause, as witnessed for in the Testimony of the Original Seceders: and although upwards of forty years have passed away since that time, and though I am now writing these reminiscences in 1868, in my 74th year, in Iowa, one hundred and twenty miles west of the Mississippi, I still say,—“Thy vows are upon me, O Lord!” Those were the days of my espousals to Christ, when the candle of the Lord shone bright on my head, and when I experienced great searching and enlargement of heart.

The nearer the time came for me to leave my dear, my native land, the more difficult I found it to be to snap asunder the ties which bound me to it. It is only those who have experienced it who can imagine what it is; words cannot convey it.

“Land of my sires! what mortal hand  
Can e’er untie the filial band  
That knits me to thy rugged strand?”

The feelings of the highlander on leaving the land of his fathers, are beautifully described in the following lines by a favorite poet;

“Farewell! farewell! dear Caledonia’s strand;  
Rough though thou be, yet still my native land:  
Exiled from thee I seek a foreign shore,  
Friends, kindred, country to behold no more.”

Though there was not one on the continent of America that I had ever seen, to my knowledge, in the flesh, (except a student who was at college with me,) yet I had an unshaken confidence in God, that if He had any work for me to do on the other side of the Atlantic, He would protect me on the mighty deep, and open a way by which it would be accomplished. I have lived to see my hopes exceeded, and that my confidence in Him was not misplaced:—

“My mouth the praises of the Lord  
To publish cease shall never.”

The last Sabbath I preached in Scotland was in Glasgow, for Rev. Matthew Murray (Original Seceder,) when on my way to Greenock. But no vessel being ready to sail from the Clyde for some time, I went by steamboat to Liverpool, where I remained a week until a vessel was ready for sea. Of all the places I have been in, Liverpool excelled for wickedness, and for expensive living. I was glad to get out of it.

I was two Sabbaths in Liverpool. On the first, I went to the United Presbyterian Chapel, where I met with a countryman from Brechin, who took me to his pew. A young gentleman dressed in a long black silk gown with enormous wide sleeves made his appearance in the pulpit, and gave out one of David's Psalms, which was sung accompanied with some musical instruments. On the second and third occasions, the preacher gave out Watts' Hymns. I spoke of this to my countryman, and asked him how he could reconcile his conduct with the way he was brought up: to which he replied: "We must conform to the custom of the time and place, otherwise we would soon have an empty house"! Thus, thirty eight years ago, was the leaven of hymn-singing indulged by that church, which has now leavened the whole lump! Let such as are the friends of Scriptural Psalmody and wish to hold on in the good old way take warning, and check the first appearance of conformity for the sake of numbers, lest they may have to repent of it when too late. Errors in doctrine, or corruptions in the worship of God, are like the letting out of water: the beginning may be small, but none can tell how large a stream it may become. I confess I am not without my fears as to the way in which some things on Communion and Psalmody are drifting in our Church; but I trust the Lord will preserve his own cause, and raise up witnesses in its defense.

I had learnt many lessons to be careful of my means, and so did not wish to expend unnecessarily what money I had, not knowing how much I might need if ever I got across the water, and should have to sojourn I knew not where, among strangers. I did not feel disposed, therefore, to take a passage in the first cabin, the charge

for which was high ; neither did I feel disposed to go into the steerage and mix with so many swearing, rough characters that were found there ; but I chose the second cabin, where the company was more select, the accommodation better, and the fare moderate. I provided my own bedding, and purchased my own provisions which I thought would be sufficient for the voyage, and agreed with the coloured cook for so much which I was to pay him when we landed in New York provided he would make ready my victuals.

We loosed from our moorings one beautiful morning, the first of September 1831, and sailed with a light fair wind down the Mersey, having on board about one hundred passengers, besides the ship's crew. Before the pilot left us, all the passengers were summoned on deck, their tickets examined for the voyage, and also their provisions to ascertain whether they had enough ; as many made a practice of smuggling themselves on board without paying or having any provisions, and when out at sea of making their appearance and begging for a living and a passage to the other side along with the rest. All were found correct, excepting two boys about the ages of twelve and fourteen, who were found without provisions or any one to see after them ; and never having paid for their passage, they were ordered on board the Pilot boat immediately. I did feel deeply when I saw the poor boys dragged like dogs, crying ;—"O let us go to America to our father, for our mother is dead, and we have no one to see to us !" and thrown into the boat and their little bundles after them. I felt as if I could have paid their passage and given them a share of my biscuit, dried beef, potatoes, oatmeal, tea, coffee, beans, and apples, but I was afraid of the consequences.

When we got as far down as between Wales and Ireland, a most dangerous coast, the wind changed direct from the Atlantic, and soon blew a hurricane, and directly in our teeth. Though most of the vessels that had sailed in company with us faced the storm and got into plenty of sea-room, our captain preferred to go through by the Irish Channel, thinking it more safe ;

which resolution very nearly proved to have been the loss of the ship and all on board. It was a dismal, dark, and stormy night; our ship running under close-reefed topsails. What rendered our situation more precarious was, that neither our Captain nor mate, nor any on board, had ever sailed through that narrow passage before (the ship and crew were American): they came to me greatly perplexed about their safety, and inquired the names of the light-houses we saw shining to warn of danger along the Irish and Scotch coasts. I told them all I knew of these, which was not much; and they examined their charts, and did what they could to keep off the rocks. I remained on deck, and had at times fearful forebodings that Providence was working against us; that this storm, after only a few hours from our leaving the harbor, may have been occasioned by having a murderer, a thief, or a fugitive like Jonah on board, and therefore he must be thrown into the yawning wave. I tried to send up my prayer to God "when my heart was overwhelmed and in perplexity;" and He, in mercy, "who regards the prayer of the destitute," sent us unexpected relief. About midnight the wind moderated and changed; and I understood by what I saw in the countenances of the seamen, and learned from what they were saying to each other, that we were now out of danger. I went to my bed—or rather, I should say, my bunk, being the first night on the water, "and quiet sleep did take;" and when I awoke at daylight and went on deck, I found "the storm changed into a calm," and the ship right alongside of those terrific perpendicular rocks on the Scottish coast called the Mull of Cantire, becalmed, with her head towards the Atlantic, and moving slowly along with the tide.

It was the Sabbath, and the first we were called to observe on the mighty deep. The most of us endeavoured to remember it as well as we could according to our circumstances. A number of Tracts were distributed among the sailors and passengers, which were thankfully received and read. Many, especially those from Scotland, I saw, were reading their Bibles, and

singing, at times, Psalms to tunes which were familiar to my ear. We had two American Ministers on board, who had been over for the benefit of their health; Mr. G. a Presbyterian from Virginia, and Mr. C. a Congregationalist from Connecticut. Mr. G. preached on deck to a very attentive audience, from Genesis xii. 5; "And they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came." The sermon was a very good and appropriate one, and delivered in a very earnest, impressive manner. I overheard one of the sailors say, "If he wish me to give over swearing, he must not preach hell and damnation to me." Towards the afternoon a breeze sprang up, and the land became less discernible, until we lost sight of it entirely. The following beautiful lines of Pringle describe my feelings and sentiments on that occasion:

Home of our hearts! our fathers' home!

Land of the brave and free!

The keel is flashing through the foam

That bears us far from thee:

We seek a wild and distant shore

Beyond the Atlantic main;

We leave thee to return no more,

Nor view thy cliffs again:

But may dishonour blight our fame

And quench our household fires,

When we, or ours, forget thy name,

Green Island of our sires!

Our native land—our native vale—

A long and last adieu!

Farewell to bonnie Lynden-dale,

And Scotland's mountains blue!

In the evening we had worship in the second cabin, when upwards of fifty were present. The two ministers and I agreed to have a prayer-meeting every evening in the same place; which we regularly kept up to the end of the voyage, unless when prevented by stormy weather. Sometimes, in the clear, calm, sunlight evenings our attendance was small, for the greater

part of the company rather chose to unite in the dance and listen to the fiddle on deck, than to unite in prayer and listen to the praises of God under deck. Such is the influence which our early habits and sentiments have over us, and which manifest themselves whether we are on sea or land, at home or abroad.

Next morning when I came on deck no land could be seen, neither did we see any until nine long weeks after, during which time our ship plowed on her weary way, sometimes in the calm and sometimes in the storm, and mostly all the time encountering head winds; and we were accustomed to see nothing as far the eye could reach in every direction, except at times a vessel sailing in an opposite direction; and confined as in a prison along with many whose practices and conversation evinced that they "had no fear of God before their eyes." It was an unpleasant and wearisome time. We had two deaths on board. It was a very solemn sight to see the body of one who but a few days before was in good health, launched into the deep, with some iron weight fastened to it to sink it to the bottom; not knowing but that *our* time might come next. We encountered one terrific storm, which struck the most hardened on board with alarm, as it was the general opinion of all that we would never see the land any more. The sailors saw the storm coming from the south-west, and they did all they could to prepare to meet it. It began with thunder and lightning—and of all the thunder-storms I have seen, that one on the sea was to me the most alarming—with hail and rain. The wind blew a hurricane, causing the waves to swell and rise, and our ship to reel and stagger, plunge and pitch; and tearing what sails were up to tatters, leaving our masts like bare poles. The sea rose mountains high, sweeping our decks fore and aft, carrying every thing overboard that was not well fastened. All the passengers, except those in the first cabin, were nailed under hatches, both to keep them out of danger and to prevent the water from getting into the hull of the ship. There we were in almost utter darkness, like to be suffocated from the want of fresh air; some



weeping and wailing; some cursing and swearing; while others were singing and praying; and the children screaming; and almost all vomiting; scarcely one able to help another. Boxes, trunks, barrels, and every thing that was not made fast, dashed about from one side to another at every plunge the ship made (and these were many), at the risk of both life and limb. Such a scene I never witnessed. I felt thankful I had neither father nor mother, wife nor child, to see to, for I thought I had enough to do to take care of myself. I swung myself into my bunk, out of the way of loose boxes and trunks that were every once-and-a-while dashing around; and tried to compose my mind and to commit myself and all on board to Him who "ruleth the raging of the sea," and "stilleth the noise of its waves, and the tumult of the people." Having been accustomed to the sea from my youth up, I never was in the least sea-sick either in storm or calm, though I must confess I was at times afraid: for among all the waves I had ever seen, and storms I had encountered when sailing on the German ocean and other places, I never saw such mountain waves as swell and rise on the Atlantic. The storm increased during the night, and few thought of seeing the morning. I got it into my head that if I only could make out to get on deck, I would have a better chance of my life if the ship should go to pieces or sink, than when nailed below. I therefore contrived to climb up through a narrow hole and get above. Nothing could be seen but the raging, merciless billows breaking around our frail ship, tossing her to and fro at their pleasure, breaking over her, and threatening every time she went under never to let her rise any more; and nothing was heard but the loud roaring and whistling of the wind through the ropes and rigging. The steersmen were lashed to the helm, and here and there I saw a sailor terror-stricken, holding on to some firm part lest he should be washed overboard. If I was bad below, I soon found I was no better nor safer above. During my short stay on deck, and while holding on with all my might when I saw the breaker coming, Mr. C. the tall lank min-

ister from Connecticut came out of the first cabin greatly excited, looked round on the dreadful scene, and, stretching out his long arms, exclaimed with a loud voice—"Oh, Mr. G., I am now going to heaven on the top of a wave!" I had not time to make him an answer, until a tremendous sea struck the ship, sweeping her from stern to stern, throwing him down, and leaving him sprawling on the slippery deck bawling out for assistance. He was picked up and set upon his feet; and in place of having to look at him "going to heaven on the top of a wave," I had the satisfaction of seeing him safely conducted into his cabin, and of closing the door behind him. During the time I remained on deck the cry was raised,—*"A man overboard! a man overboard!"* He had been aloft, and fell from one of the yards into the sea while attempting to reef a sail. Strange to say, in place of being drowned, the next wave that came threw him on board, and dashed him into a place from which he required assistance to drag him out. I went below, satisfied that my situation was far worse and more dangerous above; passed the night very uncomfortably; and longed for the dawning of the day.

Before daybreak the storm had spent its fury, and it was becoming quiet and still; though there was a heavy swell, which made the ship roll from side to side, rendering it almost impossible to walk without falling. In the forenoon the sun shone out, making it more pleasant. The hatches were opened, and all were permitted to come on deck once more, to breathe more freely, look around, wash themselves, and get something to eat and drink—of which we all stood much in need, no fire having been kindled nor water served out for nearly twenty-four hours. Such a motley group of men, women, and children! And such a scrambling, scrubbing, and washing as went on! All day the sailors were busy splicing ropes and mending sails, and the strongest fellows among the passengers were kept working at the pumps; so that quite a new life on board was manifested, and the sailors once more made out to steer the ship on her course for

the western world. In the evening we had a sermon as usual, and it fell to my turn to preach. After having taken firm hold of a post or pillar by placing my left hand around it, to keep me from falling (for the heavy swell continued), I gave out part of the 107th Psalm to be sung—the full force of which I had never before so well understood:

“For He commands, and forth in haste  
The stormy tempest flies,  
Which makes the sea with rolling waves  
Aloft to swell and rise.”—&c.

In my discourse, I endeavoured to make my remarks to bear on our present circumstances; to bless God for our deliverance; and to show how we should manifest our gratitude to Him in time to come. We had the largest meeting that evening that we ever had, before or after. All were very attentive; some being deeply impressed with what was said, and seemed thankful for the deliverance God had given them from a watery grave. The man who was washed overboard was present that night; so were also some others whom I never saw present before nor after that time. These were like too many in the world when the Lord lays his hand on them, and makes all his waves and billows to go over them: then they call on Him for deliverance and make their vows; but when the storm is over they return to their lords and lovers, and forget the hand that delivered them. May this never be the case with us! but may we live in grateful “remembrance of all the way the Lord has led us, to prove and to try us.”

“Think, O my soul! devoutly think  
How, with affrighted eyes,  
Thou saw’st the wide extended deep  
In all its horror rise!  
Confusion dwelt on every face,  
And fear in every heart,  
When waves on waves, and gulfs on gulfs,  
O’ercame the pilot’s art.

"Yet then, from all my griefs, O Lord!

Thy mercy set me free,

Whilst in the confidence of prayer

My soul took hold on thee.

For though in dreadful whirls we hung

High on the broken wave,

I knew Thou wert not slow to hear,

Nor impotent to save.

"The storm was laid, the winds retired,

Obedient to Thy will;

The sea that roared at thy command

At Thy command is still!

In midst of dangers, fears, and death

Thy goodness I'll adore;

And praise Thee for thy mercies past,

And humbly hope for more."

Our ship cut her way through the trackless, solitary deep, nothing to be seen from day to day to attract our attention except a sail at a distance, the dolphins gambling and tumbling at our bow, and Mother Cary's black chickens following at the stern in the track our ship made, expecting to get something to eat. Our old courses were followed. Those amongst us who were religiously inclined kept up our evening meetings, and conversed one with another concerning the things belonging to our everlasting peace; while those who cared for none of these things played cards, fiddled, danced, and drank whiskey—of which last mentioned article the Captain had great store and sold it out to the poor, infatuated, and thoughtless men and women. We had pleasant weather, and a favorable gale for two or three weeks; and all on board wearied much to see land. The first question asked when we came on deck in the morning was,—“Any sight of land yet?” We had been then out at sea fully eight weeks, and no prospect of that land whither we were going! It was no wonder that those who accompanied Columbus in his first voyage lost patience and threatened to rebel and turn back, who had not the most convincing evidences that land was ahead if they continued to sail

due west, when we who had all the evidences except ocular demonstration, that there existed such a place as New York, on the Continent of America, were so sceptical and impatient. The first intimation which we got that we were not far from land, was from a large eagle that had been driven out to sea and had lost his reckoning, and came hovering round our ship. Shortly after this, the joyful cry was raised by the man at the mast head,—“Land O ho! Land O ho!” This warmed every heart, and brought up many who were in their beds sick, to descry the land. By looking attentively, we saw in the distance a low-lying black bank, in appearance, which in the course of the day became more and more discernible. Little did we know what was before us in that land which we longed to see, what our joys and sorrows were to be in it, where our footsteps were to be marked out on it, or where our narrow house was to be under it. These things were wisely hid from our eyes, and were to be revealed to us in a time and way that seemed good in God’s sight. By-and-bye we saw a sail-boat steering for us under a brisk gale; and our sailors soon discovered it to be the pilot boat, to put on board one of their number to steer us safe to harbor. As the health officer was to visit the ship when we got within the Narrows, the Captain gave orders to all on board who were able to leave their beds, to wash themselves, and change their clothes, as he would come to-morrow to examine whether there were any infectious disease among us; and announced to us that it would depend on his decision whether we should sail direct for harbor, or remain on Quarantine ground for forty days. All were mustered on deck when the inspecting officer came; and each person on board passed by him, was individually examined, and we were declared worthy to go into harbor. I was much delighted with the scenery as we passed up the bay, and more especially the nearer we came to New York. I must confess I never saw any thing in all my travels either in Scotland, England, or Ireland that could equal the scene for grandeur: the great City, the Battery, the extensive shipping lying

along the Hudson and the East rivers, and the numbers of boats, sail and steam vessels, going some one way some another on the beautiful expanse of waters. When we got ashore, we could scarcely stand steady or walk, our heads were giddy from being so long accustomed to the motion of the ship.

The day after we landed being the Sabbath, I made up my mind to go to the House of God and return Him thanks for protecting us on the mighty deep and "bringing us in safety to our desired haven." After walking nearly two miles and searching for the Associate Presbyterian church, we at last found it in Grand street, whose Pastor then was Dr. Stark. Oh how glad I was once more to unite in the praises of God in singing those Scripture Psalms which I had been accustomed to in the land of my fathers; and to hear the gospel preached in a foreign land by a countryman of my own, in connection with a church so nearly alike to the one I had left! What a change this was to the Sabbaths I had been accustomed to for nine weeks past! I thought it was no wonder that David exclaimed when banished from the ordinances of God's House,—“How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! My soul longeth, yea even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God!”



## CHAPTER V.

FROM MY ARRIVAL IN NEW YORK TILL MY ORDINATION AND SETTLEMENT AS PASTOR OF BOVINA CONGREGATION, N. Y.

Called on Dr. Stark—His coldness to me—Great kindness and hospitality which I received from Messrs. James Geery and John Duncan—Received and admitted by the Presbytery of Albany in connection with the Associate Synod of North America—Appointed to preach to Bovina congregation, N. Y.—Reached Bovina and preached there for some time—Manners and customs and mode of living of the settlers there in those early times—Sketch of the origin and history of the Bovina congregation—Left Bovina—Preached to the Hebron, Octorara, Guinston, and Philadelphia congregations—Rev. Wm. Easton of Octorara congregation—Sketch of Guinston congregation—Meeting of the Synod at Philadelphia—A call presented to me from Bovina congregation—The call accepted—Ordination and settlement there.

I CALLED on Dr. Stark on Monday, and delivered a few letters addressed to his care. He inquired what church I belonged to, and with what church I meant to connect myself in this country; and whether I had any money to pay my way: I told him I belonged to the Original Seceders; that I came to this country with the full intention of connecting myself with the Associate Synod; and that after I had paid my way thus far, I had, by the kindness of Providence, \$150 in gold sovereigns over, besides a good supply of wearing clothes, and two large boxes filled with books. When he found that I did not come from the United Presbyterians, among whom were all his friends, but from the Seceders whom he disliked, he “showed me the cold shoulder,” and did not manifest that he “knew the heart of a stranger” nor “remembered that he also was



once a stranger in a strange land." He did two things, however, for me worthy of being remembered: in place of introducing me to some of my wealthy countrymen belonging to his congregation, who would have been glad to have seen me and to have accommodated me on having newly landed, he took me to a family in Pearl street who kept boarders, where I had to pay \$3.50 per week: also he took me to the New York bank, in which he urged me to deposit \$100, and to keep the other \$50 for my incidental expenses. Here I now was in this great and populous city, without knowing a single individual on whom I could call to reveal my mind, and obtain information what was best for me to do. When I was down-cast I called to remembrance some of the times in which I knew not whither to turn to the right hand or the left, and how God, in his providence, had interposed for my relief; and I reflected with myself that He in whom I then trusted was as able to open up a way for me in the city of New York as he was to open up a way in the city of Edinburgh when I first landed there.

Among many promises from which I derived relief, the following dwelt on my mind, which was given to Jacob when he was a stranger sojourning in a strange land;—"Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest." I wrote in my lodgings in Pearl street a sermon on these words; and preached it among the first I preached in this country, with considerable liberty. He who orders all events for good, from the flight of an angel to the fall of a sparrow, had his own time and way of making me acquainted with a few of his true friends and followers; to whom I was much indebted, and whose kindness I have not forgotten, even to this day. As the following two individuals and their families were the first who when I was a stranger took me in, I am only discharging a debt of gratitude to their memory when I mention their names. The one was Mr. James Geery, a native of Ireland, and an Elder in Grand street congregation, a respectable, wealthy merchant, then living on the corner of Mulberry and Walker streets, dis-

tinguished for his honesty, intelligence, public spirit, and benevolence; also for his strong attachment to the doctrines and usages of the Associate Church, and his liberality in supporting them, and his zeal and unwearied exertion in promoting them. The other was Mr. John Duncan, a native of Scotland, and also an influential Elder in Grand street congregation, who from its small beginning had done much to bring it to what it then was, and who carried on an extensive business in the wine, spirit, and tea line in 407 Broadway. Mr. Duncan was a man distinguished for his general information, firmness of purpose, decision of character, and exactness in the management of his affairs, whether temporal or spiritual. In him the Associate Church had a true, tried, warm friend, who had been from his youth conscientiously attached to her principles, and did much for their support; and in these he was always assisted and encouraged by his pious, active, amiable lady. Their house was a sanctuary for all our ministers when they came either to preach in, or pass through the city. As I am endeavouring in plain language to give a statement of some of the remarkable ways the Lord led me, to the praise of the glory of his grace, I cannot omit mentioning the following. The state of my mind then was not dissimilar in some respects to that of the prophet when he sat under a Juniper tree, said his prayers (it was well they were not answered!) and then fell sound asleep, when an angel gently awoke him and said,—“Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for thee!” I firmly believe that the same God of wisdom, power, and goodness who commissioned the angel to go to the relief and encouragement of Elijah, appointed and directed James Geery to seek me out in an obscure corner of Pearl street and say,—“Arise and come to my house; here you must not remain any longer!” He informed me, when he called and found me in my room musing over the past, the present, and the future, that he had noticed me for two or three Sabbaths past attending church, and no one paying any attention to me; that he had inquired and found out that I was a

preacher newly landed from Scotland; and that he never could have peace in his mind until he should come and inquire into my circumstances, and whether or not I needed assistance. *There* was a "friend indeed!" On these things I fully informed him how matters stood, and who had been the means of getting me where I was then boarding. He seemed agitated and displeased, and said, "things should have been arranged otherwise if I only had known of you sooner." "At any rate," said he, "whether you can pay your way or not, this is not the place for you. You must come to my house, and make it your home as long as you remain in the city. Remember and be ready by to-morrow morning, and I shall send my son with a cart, and bring you and your trunks and boxes to my house." This was the Lord's doings! I accordingly embraced the opportunity; paid up all charges; and went along to my new lodgings. Here I found a home something like that to which I had been accustomed in my native land; family worship night and morning; and a Prayer-meeting every Thursday evening. Here I became acquainted with many godly persons belonging to the same church, from whom I derived much important information, which was of benefit to me afterwards. I felt comfortable, happy, and contented in being thus kindly entertained in the families of Mr. Geery and of Mr. Duncan; and I waited with patience for the Presbytery of Albany to meet to instal Mr. Irvine in the Second congregation; of which the above named gentlemen were elders, they having, for just and sufficient reasons, withdrawn from Grand street congregation.

When Presbytery met, as was usual in those days, I preached before them, handed in my certificate, and gave in my accession to the Testimony of the Associate Synod of North America, and was regularly admitted, and received appointments to preach within their bounds. Here a new field was opening before me; and how I was to occupy it, and where my wanderings and resting-place was to be, gave me considerable concern; but though I was ignorant of those things, I knew

and was persuaded that He in whom I put my trust knew all things, and would give me what was for my good.

My first appointment was to Bovina, Delaware Co., N. Y.; to which place I went by steamboat up the Hudson river as far as Katskill, then by stage across the Katskill mountains to within five miles of my destination; this latter distance I went in a sleigh, the ground being then covered with snow. The first Sabbath I preached, although the weather was stormy the people turned out well; were very attentive; and expressed their thankfulness that one had been sent once more to preach the gospel among them, of which they had been so long deprived: and during the other Sabbaths I remained, the house was full. I went among them, visited them in their houses, prayed with them, and catechized them and their children; with which they seemed well pleased. I found them generally well acquainted with their Bibles, the Psalms, and the Shorter Catechism; and much attached to the Presbyterian form of church government, in which they were brought up. They were mostly all from Roxburghshire, Scotland, except two or three families from the North of Ireland. On the Sabbaths we had an attentive, deeply interested, plain-dressed, orderly audience; among whom I could not help noticing more than the usual number of young, healthy, intelligent looking boys and girls, with a great many infants in their mothers' arms. The practice of the Scotch, to bring their children to the House of God from their infancy, taught them how to behave, and listen to His word when young; and they derived the benefit of it when they grew up to manhood. This practice was followed when I first went among them, and is continued to the present day; and I trust it shall never be given up:—"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." In those days you would have looked in vain in the church for a broad-cloth coat, a silk dress, a pair of morocco slippers, or a display of gaudy ribbons. Old and young were almost all clothed from head to foot with what

was made with their own hands, with the exception of a "Maud" or plaid, which in former times was found useful when facing the blast on "Ettrick's Banks" or "Yarrow's Braes." I found there what others have found in all new countries whose settlers are of a mixed character and not under the restraints of religion; rather too free use made of intoxicating liquor; which had a bad influence, not only on the old, but on the rising generation. Among these mountains, it was the common practice to use it freely at births, marriages, and funerals, at logging bees, husking bees, chopping bees, raisings, vendues, and in the harvest field; the bad effects of which were too frequently seen then, and for years after. I am happy in having to say, that such has been the effect which the gospel has had on those now living in that section of country, that the use of liquor on any of the above mentioned occasions, or indeed on any other occasion, is never to be seen; and it is not even permitted to be sold in the Township. A happy change for the better. May it long continue!

In my visitations among these good people, I had often to climb up the steep sides of the mountains, through the dense woods, guided by what they called "blazed trees," that is, by marks made on the trees, until I found the places I wanted; for many of them were then living in the timber and clearing, around them the huge trees of maple, birch, beech, basswood, elm, and hemlock; but wherever I went I saw evidences of thrift and hard labour, in their log-houses, in their cleared fields, and in their stone and log fences; and heard the bleating of sheep, the lowing of oxen, and the cackling of geese and chickens. Though frame houses were few and far between, yet the well-daubed log-houses, with the blazing fire and clean hearth-stone, and every thing plain, neat, and comfortable, gave unmistakable proof—though "far in a wild, unknown to public view"—that they and their children lived in far better circumstances, and enjoyed far more of the substantial comforts of life, than any one ever could have imagined who never had visited them. "The



Big ha' Bible," the Psalm book, the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Assembly's Shorter and Brown's Catechisms, the Pilgrim's Progress, Boston's Fourfold State and his Crook in the Lot, Guthrie's Trial of a saving interest in Christ, together with the Poems of Robert Burns and James Hogg the Ettrick Shepherd, were frequently met with. These two last mentioned authors were read and mused on in the long winter evenings by the light of the large logs that blazed in the fire-place; at which I was not much surprised, for such genuine descriptions in verse in our mother tongue, of the habits, customs, and manners in which we were brought up, take strong hold of us, especially in a foreign land. The wheel and the reel, the loom, the churn, the cradle, and the axe, were all kept in constant motion; and with the wholesome and nourishing oat-meal porridge and milk, and oat-meal cakes fired on the hearth, together with well-baked rye-loaves, beef, mutton, beans and barley for the broth-pot, along with lumps of yellow butter, and cheese of the best quality, they made out to live very comfortably and independently. I saw and tasted, on special occasions, the *Scotch Haggis*; of which Burns says:

" Fair fa' your honest, sonsie face,  
Great chieftain o' the puddin' race!  
Aboon them a' ye tak' your place,  
Painch, tripe, or thairm;  
Weel are ye worthy of a grace  
As lang's my airm."

In the fall of the year, or in the beginning of winter, it was quite a common thing to meet men carrying a roll of cloth from the Fulling mill under one arm, and a roll of upper and sole-leather from the Tannery under the other, to be made, mostly by themselves, into garments and boots and shoes for the winter; which in that mountainous region is very severe. These were the days when health, happiness, and contentment abounded; when fewer diseases, fewer store bills, and fewer doctors' bills were met with, than in after years when more luxury, wealth, fashion, and

finery abounded. These were the times when a foundation was laid for a homestead; when the young had a Sabbath School at their own fire-side, with able, earnest teachers, in which they were "brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" when they formed habits of endurance, perseverance, and economy, the happy effects of which are now felt in their children's children. May these latter never be found guilty of doing any thing to dishonour the memory of their sires! and may they endeavour to train up *their* children likewise, to know and love these precious truths and godly practices which their fathers and mothers taught *them*, and thus be "following in the footsteps of the flock" and handing down to posterity "the faith once delivered to the saints!"

Perhaps it may not be found out of place here to give a brief sketch of the rise and progress of that congregation up to the time of which I am now writing. Its subsequent history will be given afterwards as we go along. About the beginning of the present century, when the country was a wilderness densely covered with timber all over those mountains, emigrants began to come in, and to choose their locations; among whom were two or three families from Scotland, who belonged to the Associate Presbyterian Church. These people clung to each other, as was natural, coming from the same country, and being brought up in the same church. They met regularly in each others' cabins on the Sabbath, gathered their little ones around them, and spent the day in religious exercises: they also met at a prayer-meeting during the week. This they continued to do while struggling with untold hardships for many years. But "the Lord hearkened, and heard," and answered, "the prayer of them that feared Him and thought upon His name." Others came from the same country, the society in due time increased, and they became more encouraged. They longed to have the gospel preached and divine ordinances dispensed among them and their children in connection with a church of whose doctrines and practices they could conscientiously approve; and these they found exhibited in the



“Narrative and Testimony of the Associate Synod of North America.” Accordingly, after much deliberation and prayer, they agreed to petition the Associate Presbytery of Cambridge to send them supply of sermon for a few Sabbaths; this was in 1806. The petition lay on the table for consideration, and in October of the following year the Rev. Alexander Bullions, who had newly come from Scotland, was sent out to them, and preached to them with great acceptance for a few weeks. All the names that were at the above mentioned petition were, Walter Doig, William Macgibbon, and Isaac Aitkins. Mr. Bullions was just the man to rouse and gather his countrymen scattered among these mountains, stir them up to what was right, and warn them against what was wrong; being young, vigorous, energetic, of a prepossessing appearance, having a strong musical voice, a great command of language, and a ready utterance. After he left them, they were two long years without hearing a sermon, or seeing the face of a minister of their own way of thinking. If some when they go to a new country, would imitate their example, and pray, wait, and use the means they have within their power, to edify and instruct each other, and keep their children from hearing the instruction which causeth to err, in place of giving way to lukewarmness and indifference in respect to what belongs to the glory of God and the good of their own and the souls of others, they would, no doubt, ultimately succeed as well as those faithful few of whom we are now speaking. Sincerity, faithfulness, patience, perseverance, and diligence, never fail in meeting with countenance from God; while those that pursue an opposite course He leaves to be filled with the fruits of their own devices. When Mr. Bullions returned after the time above mentioned, he found them still keeping up their prayer-meetings and increasing in numbers; many strangers being associated with them who, though not belonging to the same church, gave them to understand that if they would become organized and get preaching they would turn in and help them. After preaching to them for some

time Mr. Bullions, at their earnest request, and with permission of Presbytery, organized them into a congregation under the name of "The Associate Presbyterian Congregation of the Little Delaware;" with the following persons as members, viz., James Stoddard, Isaac Aitkens, Walter Doig, William McGibbon, David Henderson, John Elliott, James Russel, Mrs. John Elliott, and Mrs. W. McGibbon.

They had very little preaching for seven years after Mr. Bullions organized them, until Rev. Robert Laing, who was loosed from his charge in Argyle, came among them and preached with great acceptance. They made out a call for him, offering him \$250 annually as salary, which he accepted; and he commenced his labours as their Pastor in June 1814. On the 10th day of May, 1815, they raised the frame of their meeting-house, thirty feet by thirty six; in which many psalms were afterwards sung in worshipping the Lord God of their fathers, many earnest prayers presented, and able sermons preached, and souls converted and edified; where many sat down under their Redeemer's shadow with great delight and found His fruit sweet to their taste; and behind which their earthly remains now sleep in union to the person of the Son of God, and shall not awake until they hear His voice and see His blessed face in the morning of the resurrection. Many of these I was instrumental in leading by the green pastures and still waters of the sanctuary below, and with whom I expect soon to meet in the sanctuary above. Mr. Laing was one of those burning and shining lights in his day, especially in the pulpit; for as a popular preacher it was admitted by all that knew him he had not his equal; at least not in the Associate Church. For a few years, every thing went on smoothly and prosperously; several families came and settled among them who had been accustomed to hear Mr. Laing preach at the time that he was ordained in Dunse in the South of Scotland (which was in August 1785); others followed him from Argyle who were brought up under his ministry: so that their numbers increased beyond all expectation. But congre-

gations when at the height of their prosperity are often punished for becoming heady and high-minded, or for thinking "their mountain stands strong" as to numbers and wealth, and that they "shall never be moved;" or, for what too frequently takes place, looking more to their minister than to his Master, and trusting more in an arm of flesh, than in the arm of the living God. Whether each, or all, or any of these were the cause of God's frowning on them and causing them and theirs for long after to drink the wine of astonishment, I shall not presume to say. But eight years from the time Mr. L. was ordained among them had scarcely expired, when the Presbytery found it necessary to loose him from his charge and declare the pulpit vacant. More about this unpleasant affair I do not feel at liberty to speak, as I do not deem it would be for general edification to rake up the ashes of those fires which once burned so hot, but which are now happily put out, I trust for ever. Congregations should "take heed while they think they stand, lest they fall," and should pray earnestly "that Satan may not be permitted to have them that he may sift them as wheat."

Nine long years passed over their heads before they were permitted to see another pastor placed over them, during which time they had occasionally preaching and the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper dispensed among them. They made out several times a call for one to labour among them, but none of these were accepted. It was said the young men were afraid of preaching before such a critic as Mr. L.; and that he did all that lay in his power to terrify and drive them away. It was reported that whenever he heard of a minister having come whom they liked and were about to call, he was sure to go, as he was wont to say, and "examine the laddie's quilts;" and then went to certain quarters, where, as he said, he "tore them a' to tatters." However these things may have been, he and I were on the best of terms, and I never heard that he found fault with *my* "quilts," or "tore them to tatters;" though I believe they were no better put together than others. Before his death, which took

place in 1839, matters gradually settled down, he and his opponents became reconciled to each other; so much so that he assisted me in the dispensation of the Supper, much to the satisfaction of all parties. His remains lie in the old grave-yard, which is long ago filled with inhabitants, within a few feet where once stood the pulpit in which he used to preach his remarkable sermons, of an hour and a half and sometimes two hours long, without scarcely any of his audience either becoming wearied or going away. A plain substantial monument, erected by the congregation, marks the spot where his body sleeps.

This short sketch of the rise and progress of the congregation I deem sufficient; and it brings it down to the time when I was first preaching to them. Word came that I was appointed to go to Hebron, Washington county, N. Y., in Cambridge Presbytery, and to continue there during the winter. This caused no small sensation, and many of the people called on me, and urged me to give my consent to accept a call from them to be their minister—providing they would make out one. To this I never would consent; neither did I give them any encouragement, but rather, in very plain terms, told them not to proceed in that matter; for if they did, it would fail. True it is, I saw that they stood much in need of one to labour among them, and that a wide field of usefulness was opened up; that the old needed much to be strengthened and encouraged in their declining years with the consolations of the gospel, and that the vast number of young persons who were growing up without the means of grace stood much in need of instruction in things belonging to the glory of God and the good of their own souls: notwithstanding all these and many other things which could be mentioned, I had no clearness to remain among them. I had but newly come to this country, and wished to look about me, become accustomed to the climate, and to the manners and customs of the people. Besides, I was not in love with the steep, narrow, rocky roads we had to travel, nor with the cold climate and the high mountains, and above all the

habits which some had contracted inconsistent with their profession, owing principally to their being so long in an unsettled state, like sheep without a shepherd. In a word, I thought I could never undertake such a charge, for which I had neither strength of body nor mind. I accordingly parted with them, never expecting any more to place my foot there. But alas! how short a distance do we see into the future! And how ignorant are we of the way the Most High is to lead us in this world. Nothing was farther removed from my anticipations, when I left Bovina with the full purpose never to return, than that it was the very place which God in His wisdom and love had marked out for me, and in which I was to remain for upwards of twenty years to preach the blessed gospel; and that I who a few months before had with my staff crossed the Atlantic, was to continue among these mountains until I became two bands; and then that I should cross the Mississippi with a wife, seven sons, and three daughters, along with a number of trunks and boxes filled with books, bed clothes, and wearing apparel, and in possession of as much money as to pay for a good farm. Yet all these things actually took place. "With man many things are impossible, but with God all things are possible."

When I reached Hebron, I found Rev. James P. Miller of South Argyle was appointed by Presbytery to dispense the Lord's Supper there in the new Meeting-house, and that they had contrived to have me there in order to assist him. We had a refreshing time, and many had reason to say, "Lord! it is good for us to be here!" I got comfortable lodgings, not far from the Meeting-house, with Mr. John Moodie one of the Elders. I spent the winter among them, I trust usefully and happily; visiting them from house to house; also in collecting them in their different districts and holding catechizings, which were well attended. I found the country there in a high state of improvement, its inhabitants fashionably dressed, and living in warm, comfortable houses; every thing indicated that they were twenty years ahead of the place I had lately left. I

found myself at home among a people, (many of whom had belonged to the Secession church in Scotland,) resembling those I had been accustomed to in my native land. They were good, intelligent, and consistent Seceders; who knew their profession well and abode by it, regardless of the reproaches cast on them for so doing. They had been early placed under good teachers and good discipline; Mr. Laing having long preached to them when in Argyle; and Mr. James Irvine, another able minister, having been settled for some time amongst them. I thought I could have spent my days usefully among them—of which at one time there was a prospect, but God ordered it otherwise. The eminent men who then were Elders were all from Scotland, and have years ago, along with all the then aged members, entered into their rest; while many of their children's children have arisen in that place and called them blessed: others have removed to the far West and have proved useful in beginning and supporting congregations where God in his providence has cast their lots, an instance of which we have in the congregation of Somonauk, Ill., where the name of Beveridge has been so long and so favourably known, first in the Associate Church thirty-four years ago, and now in the United Presbyterian Church. The names of the Elders were Andrew Beveridge, William McClellan, John Rea, and John Moodie. "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children."—"The promise is to you and to your children."

I received information that I was appointed to go to Guinston, Pennsylvania, in the Presbytery of Philadelphia; and I accordingly left in the beginning of March by way of Albany, New York, and Philadelphia. I remained a few days in New York, and called on the families of Mr. James Geery and Mr. John Duncan, from whom I received so much kindness when I landed; and who took a deep interest in the narrative I gave them respecting my engagements, and the state of the congregations in which I had been labouring from the time I had left them in December, I



also stopped a few days with Rev. Mr. Beveridge in Philadelphia, who informed me that I was appointed to assist Rev. William Easton in the dispensation of the Supper at Octorara on my way to Guinston; which I accordingly did. During my stay there I visited the grave of Mr. Gelletly who came along with Mr. Arnot; these were the first missionaries sent out by the General Associate Synod to this country. I mused over his grave; and thought on the changes which had taken place in our own and other churches since the time he came over; and of what should yet take place among ourselves and others in another 110 years. I had a pleasant time with Mr. Easton. I found him to be an agreeable companion, much given to hospitality, a diligent student of the Word of God, and unwearied in his efforts to promote the good of souls, and to maintain the principles of the church to which he belonged. I thought he inherited much of the spirit of those distinguished ministers who in early times of the church lived and died in that memorable place in which he was born; viz., Ancrum, Roxburghshire, Scotland.

When I went to Guinston, where I was appointed to remain until the meeting of Synod, which was to take place at Philadelphia in May, I found there many pious, intelligent, and exemplary Christians, much attached to the distinguishing principles of the Associate Church, having had great advantages of being well taught under the ministry of Mr. Clarkson, their first minister, and afterwards of Mr. Alexander Gordon. This was the same Mr. Clarkson who along with Mr. Marshall protested against the Union which gave rise to the Associate Reformed Church; and whose conduct was sanctioned and approved by the General Associate Synod in Scotland, to which they then, as a Presbytery, were subordinate, and to which they appealed. Where a people have been favoured with the labours of a diligent and faithful minister, we have invariably found that God has blessed his labours among them, and that the happy effects of those labours have been discernible among their children's children, in their being "steadfast and unmoveable, always abound-



ing in the work of the Lord" whithersoever they wandered, however numerous the inducements may have been to turn aside from the footsteps of the flock. But where a minister has been careless and compromising either in doctrine or discipline, the opposite of these things will be found. Mr. Clarkson was very particular in admitting members to communion; and often said he found it to be one of the most difficult duties of his ministry he had to perform. He was diligent to instruct those who applied for communion, on the nature and design of the Lord's Supper; what was required of those who were to be worthy partakers of it; and of the solemn obligations they were to come under to profess and abide by the Lord's cause, as witnessed for by the church to which they were to belong, and contained in her Testimony given to the world. It is asserted on good authority, that when the Associate Church had increased to upwards of one hundred and eighty congregations, the greater part of which lay west of the Allegheny mountains, in most of its congregations there was scarcely one known in which some of these that had been members of Guinston congregation were not to be found. I remained there for six weeks, during which I visited most of the families, found them well grounded in the Scriptures, the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, and the history of the churches generally, especially the one to which they belonged: and though most of the land was poor (it was called "the barrens of York"), yet I found them industrious, living in comfortable houses, and generally in good circumstances as to the things of this world. When I left them for the Meeting of Synod, they appointed an Elder, Mr. Wilson, with whom I boarded, to go along with me to request Synod to send me back to them as constant supply for a year, with a view of making out a Call for me; to which I had no objections: but God had designed not to give me my will in this matter, and this I was not long in finding out.

When we reached Philadelphia, among the first persons I met and whom I knew, was my countryman Rev. Peter Campbell of Florida, N. Y.; who told me

he had in his possession a unanimous Call from the congregation of Bovina for me to be their minister, in which he had moderated on his way to the Synod; and he added *that I must accept of it*. Seldom or ever that I remember, did I meet with anything more unexpected, or that stunned and staggered me more. I had left those good people with the full intention never to return, and had given them expressly to understand that if they moved in making out a call for me I would not accept it: and from the time I left them I had never learned from any of them, nor from any member of Presbytery, respecting their intentions, otherwise I would have tried my best to have stopped it. "God's ways are not as our ways, neither are His thoughts as our thoughts."—"Man proposes but God disposes." The Presbytery of Albany (under whose jurisdiction I was) called a meeting, principally to examine the Call, sustain, and present it; and I was notified to attend. When it was presented I requested a few days to make up my mind what I should do, which was accordingly granted. I had none in the Synod with whom I was acquainted from whom I could obtain counsel what was best for me to do, except Mr. Wilson, who hung on and urged me to return with him to Guinston; and the members of Presbytery, on the other hand, were anxious to have Bovina settled, as they had been perplexed in having calls to it refused in former times, and in finding supply for it. Here I was "in a strait betwixt two," and "which to choose I wot not." I would have willingly returned with the modest and godly Mr. Wilson and laboured among the people of Guinston, who "were at peace among themselves;" who were well-trained in the ways of the Lord; and were such consistent and enlightened and stanch Seceders; and where a wide field of usefulness seemed to be opened: but I thought, again, on the destitute situation of my countrymen among the Delaware mountains; how often they had been disappointed, discouraged, and divided; and how much need the old and the young among them had of one to warn and instruct them, and keep them from falling in with the

erroneous doctrines abounding, and the evil practices prevailing around them. I was afraid, if I refused the clear call that was now given me to "come over and help them," and should choose a field more smooth, cultivated, and pleasant, the Lord might punish me in a time and in a manner which I never would have thought of. We are ignorant of the dangers we escape, and the troubles and trials we are kept from, by not being permitted to follow ways of our own choosing. I accordingly, after giving the whole matter a prayerful and careful consideration, accepted the call; not without many fears as to the consequences, and deep convictions of my inability for such important duties devolving on me. Though I subsequently continued upwards of twenty years among them, during which time I had no small share of troubles among my countrymen—fears within and fightings without when endeavouring to warn and instruct, and put in execution the rules and discipline of the church, for the glory of God and the good of never-dying souls—yet I feel thankful to God for casting my lot among that people, and for the success with which He was pleased to crown my feeble efforts for their spiritual welfare. I have now to say, to the glory of God, and for the encouragement of young preachers, that during that memorable part of my voyage down the tide of time, those rocks and breakers which I had thought I saw lying in my course and of which I was so much afraid I have since steered safely past or through without much trouble; while, on the other hand, those under-currents and ground-swells that lay concealed, and of which I had never dreamed, frequently threatened to dash my frail canoe to pieces. Thus we will often find that the very troubles we are most afraid of will, perhaps, never come; and that those we are least looking for and not prepared to meet will overtake us. Such are the ways of Providence. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding: in all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy path." Before leaving Philadelphia I preached three Sabbaths for Mr. Beveridge in the Meeting-house

once occupied by the faithful Rev. Mr. Marshall, (and before which rested his ashes, along with those of Rev. Joseph Banks D.D., and Rev. Joseph Shaw, LL.D.

I proceeded to Albany, where I prepared my discourses for ordination, and where I delivered them. The Presbytery appointed the ordination to take place in October; and I went out to preach to my future flock in the meantime. This was in June 1832, when the fearful disease, cholera, prevailed in the land. I remember well, when passing through Albany, of seeing the stores almost all shut, and numbers of men and boys burning tar barrels on the principal streets to purify the air and, as they thought, to keep away the cholera. Mr. Martin, of the Associate Church, was the only minister who did not leave the city during the calamity, while hundreds were daily carried to their graves. It was an alarming time, both in city and country. Even among the mountains, where the air was pure, and living springs abounded, many were carried away by it, and by other diseases which very much resembled it. God's judgments were then abroad in the land, and we trust that many in it thereby learned righteousness.

When I returned to Bovina, the people were all glad to see me, and received me with much kindness. Being convinced I was in the path of duty, and that God in wisdom had designed that I should remain there as long as He had any use for me, I soon became accustomed to the rocks, stumps, rough and narrow roads, and other inconveniences incident to a new country. I may mention that they promised in their Call to give me by way of salary three hundred dollars, along with the use of a dwelling-house and barn and sixty acres of land. I went into lodgings that winter, and in the course of the next summer they erected, in a beautiful situation on the side of the "Little Delaware river," a very convenient, commodious house, on their own land, known afterwards as "the Manse."

When the day of ordination arrived, the Meeting-house was crowded with an attentive and deeply interested audience, glad once more to see one placed over

them as their teacher. Rev. John <sup>S</sup>~~P~~. Smart, of Johnstown, preached from 1 Cor. ii. 2,—“For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified.” Rev. James Martin, of Albany, and Rev. Peter Campbell, of Florida, delivered addresses to the minister and people. It was a memorable, pleasant, and encouraging time both to ministers and hearers, during which much of the divine presence was experienced. At the close of the services the following appropriate and beautiful lines were sung “with the spirit and with the understanding also,” to the praise of God who had done such great things for them:—

“According as the days have been  
Wherein we grief have had,  
And years wherein we ill have seen,  
So do Thou make us glad!”—&c.

## CHAPTER VI.

FROM MY SETTLEMENT AT BOVINA IN 1832, TO MY  
MARRIAGE IN 1834.

Felt solitary after the ordination—Deeply impressed with the solemn obligations I had come under as a Minister—Encouragements—Counsel to young Ministers—Names of my five Elders—Arrangements made for Prayer-meetings, Visitations, and Catechizings throughout the congregation—The good effects of such exercises.—Started a new Preaching station at Delhi—which was afterwards organized into a congregation; now called West Delhi—Names of the first Elders there—A close-fisted old Scotchman—Mr. Cleland their first Pastor—now in a flourishing condition.—Origin of Lansingville congregation—Names of its first Elders—now also a prosperous congregation.—Origin of the congregation at New Kingston (formerly called Platakill).—My early labours in these places as preaching stations—Our old Meeting-house at Bovina described—Amusing anecdote of the tumbling down of the stove-pipe during the lecture—Names of six additional Elders chosen in 1833—Dr. Alexander Bullions assisted at the communion in that year—Had 45 accessions—It was a good time—Measures for reformation adopted by the Session—which were successful—Reflections—The Manse finished and prepared for me—This stirred me up to seek a help-meet—whom the Lord graciously provided for me in answer to my prayer—My marriage.

WHEN the ministers and elders went away I was somewhat sad and solitary; as it was two long days' ride over high hills and rough roads to either Mr. Campbell in Florida or Mr. Martin in Albany, who were then the nearest brethren with whom I could consult in difficult matters.

I had now become solemnly bound before God, angels, and men, to declare the whole counsel of God and

keep nothing back; to give every one his portion in due season; to exhort and rebuke with all authority; and to be faithful in the maintenance of the doctrines and usages of the Associate Church as witnessed for in her Testimony, however much I might be reproached for so doing, as I should have to give an account to Christ "when He should appear in his glory with all his holy angels." In respect to the manner in which these vows were performed, I have to say, "to me belong shame and confusion of face;" and if Thou, O Lord! wert to bring me to an account I could not stand, neither could I answer for one of the many thousand sins and short-comings which Thou mightst bring up against me! I took courage from finding that every thing in the Call and in the Ordination went on orderly and encouragingly; and that although my labours and difficulties were many, I had been placed among that people by God's wise ordering, and had therefore good reason to trust in Him for support, as in former times: besides, I had the good-will of those who were members of the congregation, as well as of the community at large, who were endeavouring to do every thing in their power to make me comfortable and happy. It would be well for ministers newly settled to feel thankful for having the countenance of their people, and they should do all that is just and lawful to retain it; while at the same time they should keep humble and watchful, and guard against trusting too much in man, for the popular wind that may fill their sails to-day at the commencement of their voyage, may change by to-morrow before they scarcely get out of sight of land, and cause them to take in reefs, and earnestly wish they had never left the harbour. They should have their intire dependence on Him who permits the winds and storms to arise to try their faith, their patience, and their courage,—for if it had been a continued calm, these graces never would have been put to the test; and should have their eyes fixed on Him as their high tower, shield, and deliverer, who can come in the darkest night and in the greatest danger, and say,—“Peace, be still!—Fear not!—It is I,



be not afraid!" As it manifests wisdom in the seaman, during the calm to prepare for the storm; and in the soldier, to prepare for the battle before he gets orders to leave camp and face the enemy: so also it is the best of wisdom in young ministers to be diligent, and to prepare to meet with reverses. These things are worthy of the consideration of young ministers; for the testimony of the Scriptures, the history of the church, and the common experience of those who have been long in the ministry, prove that they are melancholy facts.

I was highly favoured by having five pious, steady, and intelligent men for Elders, all of whom were brought up in the Secession Church in their native land. Their names were, John Elliot, Walter Doig, James Russel, Hugh Clark, and Thomas Wight. When we met as a Session, no records of any former meeting could be found, except the Communicants' Roll; on which were found about eighty names. It was agreed at that meeting that we should meet regularly every month for prayer and conference; and that I should have my catechizings in the winter season in the different districts of the congregation, into which it was divided; and in the summer should visit from house to house, and in doing so that an Elder should accompany me, to show me where the people lived; for in those days many of them were living in the timber and on steep places of the mountains, difficult to reach. These catechizings and visitations I kept up for twenty years; as long as I was able to attend to them: and I have every reason to believe that they were blessed for the benefit of both old and young. For many years I had eight different districts where I met with them. Those meetings were always well attended: on those occasions Psalms, portions of Scripture, and Questions out of the Shorter Catechism were repeated and explained; these were our Text-books, in which old and young became deeply grounded. I am disposed to think that those meetings, beyond any other during my ministry, were, by the blessing of God, instrumental in raising up a generation who have shown themselves so much

attached to the church of their fathers, and have manifested such a willingness to support it. Whenever the snow fell so as to make sleighing practicable, I started with my cutter, and I always felt much pleasure in attending those religious gatherings.

The year before I went to Bovina, Andrew Hamilton and his wife Lydia, who were members, had moved down into the woods seventeen miles from that place, into a solitary location in the Town of Delhi. I became acquainted with them, and found them to be good, religious, and peaceable persons. They made me promise to go down and pay them a visit: this I did in January 1833, when the snow was deep, the weather stormy, and when the horses had to plunge and fight their way through the snow-drifts. They were glad to see us, and entertained us very kindly. The house was built of logs, near a strong spring of water, (with which they afterwards sawed their wood and made their butter,) and consisted of only one apartment, which contained two beds, and had a wide fireplace, into which they threw large logs of wood, which kept burning the whole night, giving both light and heat. I preached in the evening to a very small audience, and baptised Mr. Hamilton's child. This was the first Sermon ever preached in that then out of the way, desolate place. They made me promise to return and preach to them, which I accordingly did next summer. Word was circulated of the time when I was going down; and in consequence I had a large, attentive, and deeply interested audience, all Scotch; some of whom came a number of miles, brought their children along with them, and expressed the satisfaction it gave them to hear the same psalms sung, and the worship of God conducted in the same manner, as they had been accustomed to in the land of their fathers. Matthew Russel and his wife, who were brought up under Mr. Laing, and were much and deservedly esteemed, also moved down to the same neighbourhood, and were great comfort and company to Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton. Others got married and went down thither, where land was cheap, and new families came from

Scotland and other places; so it soon became apparent that at no distant day we should have a congregation there. This was often talked about, though they were few in numbers, and comparatively poor in purse. To encourage them, I went frequently and preached and baptised when I could conveniently get away; for the people of Bovina were as anxious as I was to have a congregation near us, in order that we might more easily and frequently obtain ministerial assistance: for sometimes I had been a whole year without seeing the countenance of a minister belonging to the same church; and I often had to dispense the Lord's Supper and do the preaching all the days connected with it, alone.

After a few years Mr. Hamilton, who was an excellent framer and carpenter, built a large frame house, one end of which we occupied for our place of worship, and which he filled up with moveable benches. I am prepared to say, that if ever I experienced divine assistance in preaching and praying, more at one time than at another, it was in Andrew Hamilton's house, when the people sat and stood closely together, both in the large room and kitchen, with their Bibles and Psalm-books, listening attentively to what was said. There are certain periods in a minister's history in which he experiences more life in his own soul, and more freedom and heartfelt satisfaction in making known the unsearchable riches of Christ, than he does at other times: and these times are not when he is surrounded with the mighty and the noble who are "dressed in scarlet and fine linen and fare sumptuously every day;" but when addressing the pious poor of God's children, whom He esteems as "the excellent of the earth," and "on whom He looks with a pleasant countenance." Suffice it to say, that I got these people formed into a Praying-society, which met during the week and on the Sabbath in different houses; which had a good effect in keeping them together and bringing in others, (I never went without Psalm-books, Bibles, and Catechisms); that I carried a petition to Presbytery for an organization, which was granted; and when I attended to effect it, Andrew Hamilton and Matthew Russel were

chosen as Elders, who were subsequently ordained. The number of persons in full communion with the Associate Church was not then above five or six, although the adherents were about fourteen. They got an acre of timber land in a suitable place as a gift from Mr. Fisher, and went to work and cleared away some of the large beech and maple trees, leaving as many as afforded an excellent shelter for themselves and horses, and then erected a very commodious house; Andrew Hamilton, Matthew Russel, Peter McEwen, and James Graham doing the most of the carpenter work themselves without even receiving any remuneration, except the approbation of their own consciences that they did what they could to have a place of worship erected, in which they and their children could meet on the Lord's Day and hear the words of eternal life spoken to them. We in Bovina raised \$100 to assist them. I remember of starting one morning in the snow with my horse and cutter with the intention of going to certain places where I thought I could obtain some assistance for them, when I met an aged, wealthy Scotchman to whom I applied for some aid, and who had always appeared to be favorable to them; but when asked to "show his faith by his works," he was as dead as a stone, and as deaf as a door nail. I listened to his objections, which were, that they were poor and few in numbers; and that they would sink themselves and their children in debt; and that they would never succeed, &c. &c. I confess I felt displeased at hearing such discouraging and groundless assertions; and when gathering up my lines, and preparing to lay on my whip on my good horse Charlie, I said with some emphasis,—“Now, Mr. —, it is my firm belief that there will be a Meeting-house erected down in that destitute place; and that the seals of the covenant will be dispensed, the blessed gospel of the Son of God preached, and sinners prepared for heaven, when your bones shall be rotting in the dust, and your money, of which you think so much, shall be scattered to the four winds.” Without laying any claim to have been a prophet, I lived to see some of these predictions fulfilled.

In 1847, fourteen years from the time I first went to them, when they had up the frame of their Meeting-house and it was partly inclosed, Mr. Cleland was appointed their supply for a year; whom they afterwards called to be their Pastor. While presiding in the Call, when I asked if they had any other candidate to nominate, a man stood up and said,—“Indeed, Sir, ye never ha’e gi’en us a chance to hear any other ane to call, unless it be yersel.’ Is na’ that the honest truth now, Sir.” This took me rather by surprise; but after recovering myself I said in substance,—“Mr. D——, as to your not hearing any other ministers for a year past, you must blame Presbytery: and as to your calling me, I would just say you had better let me alone.” I then proceeded without more interruption.

Mr. Cleland was the means of doing much good among them, proving himself to be “a workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, and giving to each his portion of meat in due season.” I spent many happy days in his company; he always, as long as I was able to preach, assisted me, and I him in return. I left him in 1856 getting along very well, but in three years afterwards he gave up his charge, principally on account of his health, and is now in Minnesota.

That congregation, in which I took such a deep interest, and whose beginnings were so small, is now self-sustaining, and increased in numbers and wealth; and better farms, with more valuable stock and improvements, and more sober, industrious, and religious inhabitants, are not to be found in Delaware county. If this short sketch shall be the means of encouraging those who have small beginnings and dark prospects as to a congregation, not to despair of success, but to pray and work, work and pray, in the cause of truth, my object in writing it shall have been gained. And if it shall ever meet the eye of some of those to whom the writer was accustomed to preach in the house of Andrew Hamilton, they will perhaps remember something about him, and what he said. May

Christ have a seed there who shall do him service while sun and moon endure! They have now 165 members, and a settled Minister, to whom they give \$600, and are in prosperous circumstances. The congregation goes under the name of West Delhi.

A few years after the West Delhi congregation got started, another preaching Station was commenced in the house of John Bryce of Hamden, 18 miles from Bovina, with very small beginnings, and considerable opposition. Mr. Cleland and I went frequently down and preached, and encouraged them; and I remember, when they had no place of worship, of assisting in the dispensation of the Supper in the Socinian Meeting-house in Lansingville; where the great majority present denied the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. I preached the action Sermon from John x. 11,—“I am the good Shepherd.” The Elders then were, John Bryce, George Wight, and J. McFadden. In order to accommodate many that lived on the Scotch mountain, and in the Cloves, they agreed to erect a Meeting-house on the east side of the Delaware river, near the village of Lansingville; and, to assist them, the congregation of Bovina gave them \$100 and the frame of their old Meeting-house, which was taken all the way on the snow, principally by John Bryce. They have a minister settled among them, to whom they give \$700. They have 65 members, and are now doing well.

I cannot avoid noticing another place which I visited as early as 1833, viz.; the Platakill; now known by the name of New Kingston. I remember of Mr. Thomas Elliot, who was a shrewd, active, intelligent Scotchman, taking me to visit the few families then scattered in different places among the woods, and working hard to clear their farms and to make a living. Their situation was something similar to that of Mr. Hamilton's at Delhi in early times, as above narrated, with the exception of their having to contend with a number of careless Dutch families who had squatted near the stream, to which they gave the name Platakill, or Flat Creek. Mr. Elliot's house being the largest and most convenient in which to hold meetings for Sermon and



Catechizing, we always met there, and were always welcomed and well entertained. It was one of my districts (although some of the members were twelve miles distant, having steep mountains to cross, with bad roads), in which I took a deep interest, and to which I was much attached, because I found they were a pious, poor, peaceable people, and struggling hard with numerous families, and anxious to have them brought up in the way they should go. For nineteen winters I travelled through the woods and high snow-drifts across the mountains, guided in many places only by blazed trees, (besides visiting them in their houses in the summer-time,) during which we always had numbers of men, women, and children in attendance; some of them coming a great distance through the snow on foot, all healthy and happy, and glad to meet each other. We began at eleven o'clock, and before we got through with hearing and explaining Questions and Answers in the Shorter Catechism, and hearing the younger ones recite their chapters and psalms, it was generally one and sometimes two o'clock: after which the greater part remained and partook of a good dinner prepared for the occasion by Mr. E., and enjoyed the company of each other. Those were memorable occasions for stirring up each other to love and good works; for honest, unreserved interchange of sentiments; and for promoting mutual esteem and confidence. When we are poor and oppressed, our graces are often more operative and apparent; but when we become rich, too frequently we become heady and high-minded, and kick against the pricks. To those meetings in the Platakill, under God's direction, and to the liberality, zeal, and unwearied perseverance of Mr. William Elliot, do I ascribe the commencement and progress of the now flourishing congregation of New Kingston, of which he is a useful and much esteemed Elder. They now number 66 members; but are at present without a minister. Knowing from experience how difficult it was for them to come to meeting, especially in the winter time when the roads were drifted up, I had frequently urged them to ask for a

disjunction and to get organized as a separate congregation, which I knew would be much in their favour, but they would never break off as long as I remained among them. Those aged and good fathers and mothers, with whom I took sweet counsel both in their own humble open log-houses in our Catechizings, and in the house of God, have almost all entered into their rest, and their works have followed them; and their children's children have risen up, and I trust are following in the good old way and finding rest to their souls.

Our old Meeting-house was built on the top of a bank, along whose bottom murmured, over its smooth pebble bed, the pure, sparkling, and never-failing waters of the Little Delaware. (Glide along, thou pleasant stream! on whose banks I spent many happy days, and where rests the dust of those with whom, in former years, I walked in company by the green pastures and still waters of the sanctuary below, and with whom I hope soon to meet in the sanctuary above, and be led by the Lamb in the midst of the throne to fountains of living waters, and to have all tears wiped away from our eyes!) It had two doors in front, to enter which we had to go up four log steps. The house was seated in a plain, substantial manner, with old-fashioned narrow pews; some of which were square, with doors, and calculated to hold from eight to ten persons, with a table in the centre on which to lay their books. The pulpit was round, something in the shape of a barrel, with room for only two persons of ordinary size to sit or stand, with a door which fastened in the inside, and to enter which we had to ascend six high steps; which placed the speaker so high that he could see round into every corner of the gallery. Thoughts, even at this distant time and place, often arise in my mind to this effect: what shall be the result on the great day of final accounts, of those Psalms that were sung, those Prayers that were offered up, those Lectures and Sermons that were delivered, and those Sacraments that were dispensed, by so many of Christ's ambassadors, to such numbers of the called and chosen and faithful

followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, in that humble habitation among the mountains of Delaware?

The house, being almost always crowded, was in the summer by far too hot; so much so that I had often to take off my neck-cloth and my coat when preaching; and some days in the winter, I had to keep on my over-coat and woolen mittens. We had two stoves that were kept agoing, with pipes that entered a drum in the centre, but which at times threw out more smoke than heat, and which often came apart and caused no small confusion. I remember that on a cold blustering day, during the discourse, when many were gathered round the stoves to keep from freezing, all at once down came the stove-pipe with a crash, and out poured the smoke and filled the house. Then commenced the confusion, coughing, and moving about. No one was hurt except good old Mr. —, who had his hat driven over his eyes! which, after prayer was over, in cold days he put on during Sermon. Had it not been for this defense, no one could tell what might have been the consequence. I stopped, sat down, and waited until order was restored, the pipe fastened, and the smoke gone; after which I rose and said,—“I make no doubt most of you are expecting I am going to say something about the conduct of the trustees, in not attending to their duty so as to prevent such unpleasant occurrences during the time of public worship. But I am determined not to say one word about it;”—and then, resumed my lecture. The Meeting-house was afterwards repaired and made more comfortable, by having new doors put on, and the windows having glass put in them.

In the summer of 1833, the following persons were elected and ordained as Elders; William Forrest, William Murray, John Dunn, Andrew Doig, John Armstrong, and Alexander McEachran; all of whom were men of intelligence and influence, and much esteemed by the community. While I write this account, so far as known to me, only two of these persons are now living. “Our fathers, where are they?” In June, the sacrament of the Supper was dispensed,

at which Dr. Alexander Bullions, at the special request of the people, assisted. He was the first who had ever preached to them, thirty years before; when the inhabitants were poor, the country a wilderness, and the friends of Christ and his cause were few and far between. Mr. B. was not very friendly to me, because I came from the Original Seceders, who testified against the union in Scotland between the Burghers and Anti-burghers; which he believed to be the dawning of the latter-day glory in the church. He was an able preacher, and was instrumental in doing much good in his day. Yet many believed that there was considerable truth in what an old woman was reported to have said of him,—“Oh, but he is dreadfully lax, and awfully fond of *population!*” (popularity). This was a very reviving and refreshing time. We had 45 accessions, some of whom had their certificates from Scotland, others from neighbouring congregations, and a few young persons were admitted on examination. For years they had been divided, distracted, and discouraged by being so long without a stated dispensation of Word and Sacraments; hence some had fallen away, and others who were ready to unite with them kept back until they saw how they should succeed; and as peace and unity were in a great measure restored, and matters generally were become prosperous and encouraging, these now came forward cheerfully. On this memorable occasion many wounds were mollified and bound up which the cause of Christ had received in the house of its friends in former years when discord and division prevailed among them; and an impetus was given to efforts the good effects of which were felt for years afterwards.

The Session, who were always ready to unite with me in maintaining or in restoring peace, purity, and unity in the congregation, began early to try to have some of those religious duties revived which were in many instances neglected in families, viz.; family worship and secret prayer; and to have some reprehensible habits which had become unhappily but too common among all classes removed or checked. This was

like taking a bear by the beard, yet they set themselves to the good work of reformation; and, through divine assistance, we persevered; and ultimately, after a few years' labour, succeeded. It is a hard matter to mitigate or entirely remove practices among a people which are of long standing, and to which they have become much attached. "It is ill taking out of the flesh what has been bred in the bone." It is from the old that the young learn habits, either good or bad, and the latter more readily than the former. Hence we found the young often referring to what the old people said or did—"as the old cock crows the young cock learns." When the Session had agreed that certain persons should be spoken to who followed the practice of dancings which was making us a reproach among other denominations, and therefore called for prompt measures to have them stopped, I remember of conversing with a young woman who wished to join the church, and endeavouring to show her how inconsistent it was with her Christian character and the principles of the church to which we belonged; when she said she had been at many of those dancings, and did not think there was any harm in it, as she saw so many there far older than she was and who were oftenest at the jug, loudest in the laugh, the first to take the floor, and the last to leave it. "But, Sir," said she, "you should remember that the old folks are far more fond of dancing than we young folks are; they are so much on the floor that we can scarcely get a reel at all." While the most part yielded, and gave up the practice, some ten heads of families along with their children left us, and united with another denomination. Others came in their place, and matters went on far more pleasantly and consistently, so that those inside and outside of the church who were at first opposed to the Session for interfering, began to see that it was the best thing they could have done. There is nothing like being faithful in the discharge of our duty when the glory of God and the salvation of souls are in danger of suffering; although we should be reproached for so doing, we shall have the approbation from above,—“Well done,

thou good and faithful servant!" and we will also receive thanks from the sinners who have been turned from the error of their ways, for having spoken to and dealt with them so seasonably and so successfully.

The Manse having been finished and ready for me to take possession of it, was the means of stirring me to consider where I could find a suitable help-meet. I had never seen my way clear to encourage any one to accompany me across the water, as I did not know how it would turn out with me, whether my health would continue, or whether I should have a settled place of abode: but when I obtained a comfortable settlement and had a reasonable prospect of getting along, I began to turn my attention to a change of life. It gave me no small concern to know what was the will of God in this important matter, which might be fraught with much good or evil to myself and to the people among whom I laboured; for I had learned by observation that much depended on a minister's wife, either for maintaining or breaking up his peace amongst his people. If ever any man needs a prudent wife, a minister does. God was pleased, I trust in answer to my prayer, to provide me one who, in every respect, was suitable for me, in the person of Miss Mary Small. She was born in the parish of Ancrum, Roxburghshire, Scotland; brought up in the Secession church, to which her father and mother and all their relations belonged; and who crossed the Atlantic two years before I did, along with her parents, a brother, and a sister. We were married on June 25th, 1834, by Rev. Duncan Stalker, Pastor of the Associate congregation, North Argyle, Washington county, N. Y.; of whose congregation she and all her relations were members. I shall only say, that I had much reason to bless God for the relation which was then formed, and which He has been pleased still to continue to the present time (June 1869); and for preserving alive our children. May they all follow her example, remember her instructions, and never do any thing to vex her while she is with them, or dishonour her memory when she shall have been taken away from them! for to them she has, from their infancy,



been an affectionate mother, unceasing in her prayers and unwearied in her efforts to promote their temporal and spiritual interests. Had it not been for her prudent management, and economy, and perseverance, neither they nor I would have been in such favourable circumstances as we now are.

## CHAPTER VII.

FROM MY MARRIAGE, IN 1834, TILL THE CLOSE OF MY  
MINISTRY AT BOVINA, IN 1853.

Every thing encouraging in the Congregation—Great benefits of Prayer-meetings—They are a spiritual Index of a congregation—Importance of praying for the Minister—A Picturesque description of the people flocking to church—The Services—Intermission—Of public and private reproof—A remarkable instance of the former—Whereby a Dancing-school project was signally defeated—A Pulpit notice, and how I handied it—Bought a farm and removed from the Manse—Reflections about Manses and glebes—Their advantages and disadvantages—Ministers' families require a home of their own as well as others—Advice to young Ministers—For a time, in 1846, I was the sole Minister with a Pastoral charge in the Presbytery—Dr. Cooper's, of Philadelphia, visit to Bovina—He assisted me at the Sacrament—His visit and Sermons long remembered—It was a refreshing time—Proceeded with Dr. Cooper to Albany to ordain Mr. Morrow there—Anecdote of Mr. Campbell interrupting me while preaching—Anecdotes of Mr. Laing in the pulpit, and how he silenced the Universalist preacher—Of the schism in the Associate Synod—I endeavoured to act the part of a peace-maker—Of crises that occur in congregations, and how the minister should meet them—Our old Meeting-house had become dilapidated—A handsome new one built in the village—Feelings on leaving the old house—The last Sabbath that I preached in it—The Texts of the Sermons on that occasion—Reflections—The new church opened—My feelings—The Texts of the Sermons—The new church described—Feelings of the aged members on the occasion—Accessions—Baptisms: the vows imposed on parents—Of Sacramental occasions: The Thursday's fast strictly kept; also the Saturday's and Monday's services—Interruptions in public worship; how checked—Breach in my health—Laid aside from preaching—Satisfactory pecuniary arrangement made with the congregation with a view to my resignation—Resigned my charge—Review of my ministry at Bovina—The number of Baptisms and Marriages—The full results will be known only in the day of final accounts.

EVERY thing went on encouragingly in the congregation. About that time Prayer-meetings were established in different quarters, and Catechizings generally well attended: one of these was held in the Manse every Thursday evening, when as many came as could be accommodated. There is not a better or a more convincing evidence of the spiritual prosperity of a people, than when you find Prayer-meetings existing among them and well attended. "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon His name." These Prayer-meetings have a tendency, when well conducted, to stir religious exercises in the souls of some, and to recommend them to others. "A praying people make a preaching minister," saith the proverb. People would be great gainers if they would attend to the instruction given by the Holy Spirit through the medium of Paul,—"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel" (Eph. vi. 18, 19). It is not surprising that some are heard saying, they are not profited under their Minister, when they seldom or never make mention of him in their prayers to God, nor pray that he may be directed to suitable messages, and "that grace may be given him to divide the word of truth aright," and thus "give every one his portion of meat in due season." If some who complain of the want of edification were to examine narrowly into the cause of it, they would discover that it lay often more in themselves than in their Pastor. "The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."

As the mountains were steep and covered with timber, this caused the people to go far round to get down to the Meeting-house, which made many to take a near cut on foot rather than go round on horseback or with

a wagon. Indeed, in those early times most came to church on foot, almost all having oxen, and few having either horses or wagons. A spring carriage of any description was a rare thing in the Township for many years after I went there. In the summer time you would have seen them coming down the sides of the mountain in groups of men, women, and children; the men carrying their coats over their arms, (some having left them behind,) and the women their shoes and stockings in their hands, tramping along and conversing together, then wading the Little Delaware, and sitting down on the other side putting on their stockings and shoes and otherwise fixing themselves up, and afterwards climbing the bank, and appearing in the house of God, clean, healthy, and happy, with their Bibles and Psalm-books, ready to "hear what God the Lord would speak." During the intermission, which in the summer was half-an-hour, (in the winter we had in the forenoon a Lecture, and in the afternoon a Sermon, without any intermission,) you would have seen the men collected together among the hemlocks attending to their horses, talking, smoking, and eating their bread and cheese, and then going to the spring to get a drink; while the females were sitting in groups on the grass with their little ones around them, eating out of the basket of provisions brought along with them, and once-in-a-while you would have seen puffs of smoke rising from among them, indicating that they were taking a whiff of the pipe. Others would have been seen walking in the grave-yard, and musing over the green sod under which lay the earthly remains of some near and dear relatives, wondering, perhaps, how they were now employed in serving God in the church above, and whether they should ever meet and know each other in that place where sin is never felt, nor danger feared. I very often told them to be careful of their company and conversation during the intermission, for the devil was never more active to steal away the Word out of their hearts which they had gladly heard, than when they had newly withdrawn from the house of God, thus preventing it from taking

root and bringing forth fruit. Some attended to this advice, and some did not. In the summer I would take a walk along the side of the fence, look over my notes, eat my piece, and then return to the church; and I kept them together generally an hour and a half longer: in the forenoon we were in two hours. In the winter time, when the Lecture was over, followed by prayer, I gave out a psalm; and when that was sung I rose, prayed, and gave out my text. This I found pretty hard work; and had it not been that I was blessed with good health and strong lungs I could not have stood it so long as I did.

I began early to reprove in public or in private when I thought that any were acting inconsistently with their Christian character and profession; as by sleeping in church, coming without their Bibles, and permitting their dogs to follow them into the Meeting-house; which last was often a great annoyance. When I gave out my text I would have said,—“Those amongst you who have condescended to bring your Bibles along with you will find the text in” such a place; and I noticed that any who had them not that time were sure to have them on the next day. In a promiscuous audience there are always some who come to “offer the sacrifice of fools,” who ought to be at certain times reproved sharply. Many of such characters met with us; whom I sometimes took occasion to address in “all plainness of speech.” I remember of being informed of a young man, a merchant in the village, who on Sabbath during intermission went round among the people urging them to subscribe in order to get up a dancing-school. I was much displeased with such arrogant conduct at the house of God, and I resolved that if I should see him next Sabbath I would “reprove such conduct before all, that others might fear,” and avoid it for the time to come. Accordingly, after the forenoon services were over, seeing him sitting in his seat in the front gallery, I said,—“There is a certain spruce young man who worships with us pretty regularly, whose motives, I am disposed to think, are none of the best, as I am in-

formed on good authority he was busily engaged last Sabbath during intermission soliciting subscriptions with a view to start a dancing-school in the village. I hope he will see his sin and turn from it, and no more be found acting as *one of the devil's recruiting sergeants*." This completely demolished their plans, and no dancing-school was ever attempted. I began thus to reprove at the beginning of my ministry, and they soon became accustomed to it; whereas if I had delayed for fear of giving offense until the honey-moon was on the wane, and then commenced, the consequences would have been different.

I remember of receiving a Notice to be read from the Pulpit, which, in substance, was like the following: "The Pastor of the Associate Presbyterian Church is requested to intimate, that the Methodist Episcopal church will be opened for public worship on Wednesday first, and consecrated; and he is invited to come himself, and to invite his people to come along with him." I read it after public worship in the forenoon; and after endeavouring to show that the consecrating of churches, grave-yards, and other things was heathenish and popish in its origin, and had no foundation under the Christian dispensation, and that our Church testified against such practices, I said,—“As for the invitation for me to go, and request you to follow, and give countenance to such popish mummeries, rather than comply with it, (stretching out my right hand and suiting the word to the action,) let this right hand forget its cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.” I then dismissed the congregation. This bold and unexpected blow against Arminianism, which was beginning to gain ground amongst us, struck my people with a sort of surprise and fear, so much so that none attended on that occasion, except a few aged women who lived near by. Some diseases require strong medicine at the beginning, to prevent them spreading and injuring the whole system; and which if used in time prevents much trouble and perplexity afterwards.

We had resided about seven years on the church lot, and during that time we had discovered that it would



be far more conducive to our peace and prosperity to be on a place of our own. We had to lay out every year considerable money to fence the lot and otherwise improve it, without any prospect of remuneration: besides, we had to pay more for hired help in-doors and out, than we could raise from it. We found we would have been gainers to have paid for our own firewood and what grain and hay we raised. Manses and Glebes have their advantages and disadvantages; but I must say from all I experienced myself, and saw in others connected with the late Associate Church in the State of New York for twenty-five years, and in the West for thirteen years, that the best Manse and Glebe a minister and his family can have are, a home which he can call his own, however poor it may be. If disease or death should overtake him, then his family has a home-stead out of which none can turn them. The very thought of having a place of our own in case of any change (and changes are often sudden and unlooked for), tends to strengthen our hands and encourage our hearts. The approbation of a people is often like the wind, which may blow favourably to-day, but by to-morrow may blow the very opposite. The history of the church affords many examples of this. They act a wise part who look out and prepare for these things. It is a sad thought for a minister to leave his widow and his fatherless children on the tender mercies of a cold, heartless world. It is true we have God's promise respecting them, that if we cast them on Him "he will preserve them alive;" but we should remember that He works by means, and if these are neglected, we have no reason to look for the promise being fulfilled, since the times of miracles are at an end.

These things and others which could be mentioned caused us to long for a place of our own, in which we should be more independent and happy, and on which if we made any improvements we should derive the benefits from them. But how this could be accomplished we were unable for some time to discover, for it took every cent of my salary to pay our way. I never could see it to be my duty to insure my life or

property for the benefit of the family while I was with them, or when I should be taken away from them; as I always was afraid that if I did so it would manifest either a weakness if not a want of faith in God's promise; who had proved himself all-sufficient to protect and provide both for me and mine in times that were past. I know that many good and exemplary Christians see no harm in these Insurances, but I must confess that I differ from them. It is a fast age this in which we live, and many new things in the church and out of it are followed, which in former times were unknown. It does seem strange and heathenish for those professing godliness, when about to leave home for a short time and take a journey either by land or water, to run and "get their lives insured;" as if they believed God was less able to protect them abroad than at home! When will such heaven-daring practices have an end?

While we were musing about making a change, (we did not let others know our intentions for fear of consequences,) God, in his love and mercy opened a door for us to make our escape which no man was able to shut, though several attempts were made. We learnt that there was a farm for sale which was within less than a quarter of a mile from the Meeting-house, consisting of 120 acres, for which they asked \$800; but it had on it a poor house and barn, and was greatly out of repair as to the fences and other things. We disclosed our intentions to a good friend of ours, a member of the congregation; who cheerfully advanced the money, and took the Deed for security; which in the course of a few years we lifted, and paid him interest on his money. We moved up to it in 1841, with no other stock than two cows and a horse; to the no small satisfaction and joy of some, and surprise and displeasure of others; and rented the church lot and house for \$50 a year to a man who worked for it on our farm. It gave great relief to our minds, although we moved into a smaller and less convenient house, to think it was our own, and to see the boys as they increased in number and grew up, planting fruit trees,

building fences, and otherwise making improvements, the benefits of which we all afterwards felt. We continued there for fifteen years; and in process of time had 12 cows, 20 sheep, a span of horses, &c.; put up two large frame barns, with stone cellars under them; also two years before we left it, we erected an excellent, well finished, modernized house, and had the farm in first-rate order, and some additional land bought into it; and when we sold it in November 1855 it brought us \$3000, and the sale of horses, cows, sheep, agricultural implements, and household furniture came to \$110. This was another instance of the Lord's kindness to us, and caused us to "set up our Ebenezer"—hitherto hath the Lord helped! The boys and girls got into habits of industry and carefulness then, which have been for their advantage ever since. I have always advised young ministers to study moderation and economy, and avoid extravagance at all times, and more especially at the beginning of their ministry; for then many favorable opportunities to better their condition and that of their families may otherwise be let slip which may never return again during their lifetime. While ministers ought to avoid every thing that is mean or mercenary, and unbecoming their office, on the one hand; they should, on the other, study not to be extravagant in dress, in the management of their household affairs, living above their income, or bringing up their children in idleness and show. Much depends on the way in which a minister conducts himself and his household, to effect the result of attaching his people to him, and benefitting his family.

Things went on much in the same way that they commonly do in country congregations, one year after another, without any thing worthy of notice which could be for general edification. We had the Lord's Supper dispensed twice in the year, commonly in June and in October; when I was frequently assisted by Dr. Martin of Albany, Mr. Campbell of Florida, and Mr. James P. Miller of South Argyle. Sometimes a probationer would be sent to assist; and several times I was left alone. The congregation in regard to num-

bers kept much about the same; and harmony and peace, with some exceptions at times, prevailed; and many evidences were given that the presence of the Lord was amongst us. I remember in 1846 of being placed in rather peculiar circumstances from May until the end of October, during which the charge of all the Presbytery of Albany came on me daily! I was acting as clerk, Moderator, and general correspondent, being the only ordained minister in the Presbytery of Albany during that time who had the charge of a congregation. Florida, Johnstown, and New York were vacant. Mr. Morrow had accepted a call from Albany, and in order to have our Presbytery constituted and him ordained, I had to send all the way to Philadelphia for my worthy friend Dr. Cooper to assist me. He cheerfully came, along with his amiable and accomplished lady; and assisted me in dispensing the Lord's Supper. His visit to our mountains was long remembered, and spoken of with the deepest feeling and interest. It was a time of refreshing to us all. The Sermon he preached on Monday was spoken of by old and young as having greatly impressed them. The text was, Psalm xlviii, 14; "This God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our guide even unto death."

We then went to Albany and ordained Mr. Morrow. The services were held in the evening. I remember, when I was addressing the congregation, Brother Campbell, who was sitting behind me, becoming impatient at the manner I was lengthening out my remarks, touched me once or twice, and then telling me to stop; to which I paid no attention. When he discovered that I was determined to take my own way, he rose under considerable excitement, disentangled his chain from his neck, and laid a gold watch right before me on the Bible; as much as to say,—“See, you positive fool! what time of the night it is; have done at once, and let us all home to our beds.” I took it up, looked at it for a moment, and then deliberately slipped it into my vest pocket, and continued speaking for some time after. I was not much put about with such an interruption, having met with similar treatment before from the same quarter.

The late Dr. Martin (with whom I was very intimate,) told me of a surprize he also met with in the same pulpit. When he was sitting behind Mr. Laing while he was preaching one Sabbath evening after the Communion to a crowded house, Mr. L., after coming down from one of those flights of eloquence which he was accustomed to take in order to breathe for a little, pulled his watch out of his pocket with some difficulty, looked at it, put it to his ear, looked at it again, and then turned round and, holding it out towards Mr. M. said, loud enough to be heard by many,—“Is that thing gawin,’ Jamie?” Mr. M. held down his head and made him no answer; and the old man resumed his discourse.

I will here introduce another anecdote, out of the many I could produce, about that wonderful man. When he was settled in Bovina, Dr. Stark of New York used to have him down frequently to assist him on Sacramental occasions; when great numbers of his countrymen would turn out to hear him. While sailing down the Hudson on board of a sloop with a number of farmers, who were taking their butter and other produce to market, there was a Universalist preacher on board, who held forth on Sabbath when they were becalmed, in a thundering manner; astonishing and captivating every one by his eloquence. Mr. Laing, who always wore a dress like a working man’s when he went from home, and who was unknown to any present, sat and listened until the speaker was done; he then began and said a few things about the original meaning of the words of his text in the Greek; on which the preacher looked at him with contempt and said,—“What do you know about Greek, old fellow?” This raised Mr. L.’s Scotch spunk, and, in his accustomed blunt and fearless manner, he said,—“You self-conceited, ignorant puppy; I could read Greek before you were able to button your breeks.” He then preached from the same text, and, as he said himself,—“I cut the poor, insignificant creature’s arguments and positions all to pieces.” And well he could do it.

The Presbyteries of Albany and Cambridge were long convulsed with what was then known as "the Stark and Bullions party;" and afterwards, when they separated from the Synod, by the name of "the Protestors." These troubles were in existence before I came to this country, and therefore I had no hand in originating them; neither did I do any thing to continue them, but I kept as far as possible neutral when both parties were quarrelling: yet I claim some credit in having had a hand in making peace, and in restoring those Protestors again to the Associate Synod; and in this I was greatly assisted and encouraged by my conscientious, peaceable, and amiable Brother, Mr. Morrow. While we were as a Presbytery endeavouring to quench the fires that had so long burned in our bounds, by passing some resolutions to hold conferences with them for mutual explanations, we met with no small opposition from different quarters: one of these was from a young, zealous Brother who had newly come into the bounds of Cambridge Presbytery, who thought himself qualified to put us all right. I had written an article in the *Evangelical Repository* stating our views of the matter and what we intended to do, with which that Brother found fault. I replied to him at some length in vindication of our proceedings and intentions, from which reply I give the following extract: "I am vexed to think that these fourteen ministers, who solemnly declare that they are attached to and have never swerved from the principles of the Associate Church, together with their twenty-two congregations, consisting of 3070 communicants and 1051 families, should be spoken of in the manner M. has done. I do not envy the head nor the heart of one who can feed and fatten upon such things; yet I fear some will devour them as wholesome, seasonable nourishment. I know that some of those men of whom M. speaks so uncharitably and unguardedly have borne the burden and heat of the day in the service of their Master, in promoting his kingdom, in proclaiming his unsearchable riches to perishing sinners, twenty years before the eyes of some that are now in the field had



seen the light of day, and who are wishing to push with head and shoulder. We who are their juniors in years, in knowledge, in experience, and in attainments, should be humble, dependent, and cautious. 'Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man; and fear thou God: I am the Lord!' That these men were entirely innocent, and had no hand in kindling or adding fuel to those fires which burned for upwards of twenty years I will not venture to affirm, for I know that they, along with one who is now no more on this side of time, had an active and sinful hand in fanning the flame; not from a love of seeing the smoke and enjoying the heat, but from a necessity under which they were laid, in self-defence, at certain times to make use of materials, however combustible; and use means, however unpleasant. But to say that all the blame from beginning to end, as M. insinuates, was chargeable upon them, and next to none chargeable upon the majority either in Cambridge Presbytery, Albany Presbytery, or Synod, I cannot, my conscience bearing me witness. I have seen too much striving for the mastery, too much nationality, too much jealousy, wrath, and bitterness, and too much of a desire to take up and circulate evil reports to support sides when taken, to say either side was without guile. I got involved in these troubles when I was raw and rash, and not ill to advise, and often nearer the heat than I found for my comfort or safety; and from what I have seen, and from what I have suffered, I would 'remonstrate' with Brother M. to 'leave off contention before it be meddled with,' and to keep as much from desiring to occupy a place in the front ranks as possible; lest he may have to cry,—'My kingdom for a horse!' or else to take to his helmet or his heels: the former, if I am not mistaken, will suit him as well as myself, best." (*Evangelical Repository* Vol. IX. p. 538.)

There is a crisis which every congregation has to go through, and when once that is over, a better state of things commonly succeeds. As the storm tends to purify the atmosphere, so that we breathe more freely and think more of the calm; so is it sometimes with

the commotions that take place among a people: they expel the noxious vapours that were hovering over them and produce more spiritual health, peace, and purity. It is therefore, better for a minister, on those trying occasions, in place of being discouraged and throwing up his situation, to hold on to his station, trust in God, and discharge his duty faithfully; and he will ultimately see light arising out of darkness, and order out of confusion. Let him be found "steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," and he will find that "his labour has not been in vain in the Lord."

Our meeting-house, which had withstood so many storms, and had been so frequently repaired, began to give way, so much so, that on some windy days it would shake and crack, to the no small alarm of many of the worshippers. This led them to think of having a more safe and commodious house, as they were now in circumstances which could afford it, and the change of the times demanded it. The Methodists had erected in the village a suitable Meeting-house; and our people concluded to have one there also. They accordingly in 1849 built a new Meeting-house in Bovina Centre at their own expense; which was allowed to have been as well finished and as convenient as any in the county, in a beautiful location, and having a gallery, a lobby, window blinds, and a steeple; and every thing, inside and outside, done up in modern style; calculated to accommodate upwards of 400 persons. Behind were shades belonging to certain families calculated to hold from 15 to 17 span of horses. The house cost upwards of \$4000. When the time arrived that we had to leave our old venerable place of worship and move down to the new one, it was found not to be such an easy matter as we imagined, either for minister or people. There are associations connected with old friends and old places, which in parting from them are found to be strong and irrepressible. There I had been permitted for nearly twenty years, through good and through bad report, amidst encouragements and discouragements, to lead in the worship of God, expound his Word,

address his Throne of Grace, and dispense the seals of his Covenant, to hundreds, many of whom had given in their account—and the Great “Day will alone declare” to whom the Word preached was “the savour of life unto life, or of death unto death.” There, we have every reason to believe, many “were made to sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus, and were sealed unto the day of” complete “redemption.” However cold and uncomfortable in winter, and suffocating in summer, there was something in the very place which words cannot explain, where we had held sweet fellowship and communion with God; where parents had devoted themselves and their offspring to His service; and where we had met with those with whom we took sweet counsel, got strength when weak, light when in darkness, and encouragement when cast down,—which caused us to leave it with reluctance and to “cast many a longing, lingering look behind.” The grave-yard, which when I first came there, had only a few committed to its keeping until Christ shall bring them with Him when He shall come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, was now so full of inhabitants, that another had to be opened. Another generation had arisen around me, many of whom I had baptised and had joined in marriage, and whose children I had also baptised; and whom I had the pleasure of seeing offering fair for being useful in the church, and an honour to society. “The promise is to you, and to your children.” The last Sabbath we were in our old place of worship; I preached with more than ordinary freedom, in the forenoon, from Exodus xxxiii. 15,—“If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence;” and in the afternoon from verse 14th,—“My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.” Both these passages afforded an abundance of thoughts suitable for the occasion; but how I disposed of them I shall not venture to say. I distinctly remember I had some strange indescribable feelings when for the last time I came down from that high old-fashioned pulpit, which when I first entered in December 1831 I was vigorous and in the prime of life, and newly come from

my native land; but now my hair was becoming silver-gray, and my strength was beginning to fail me, both in body and mind. Such are some of the changes to which we are subjected in this transitory world.

Next Sabbath, when our new place of worship was opened, it was filled in every corner. I gave out the One hundredth Psalm, long measure; which was sung with more voices and with more earnestness and deep feeling than we had been accustomed to in former times; every thing around us tending to produce those emotions. Such was the effect of the great change on the minds of many, that tears were seen gathering in their eyes. I have to confess that my own feelings were like to get the better of me when I heard such a swell of voices sounding along the high roof, and when for the first time I rose in that place, in such a vast assembly, to address the throne of Grace. In the forenoon I preached with great freedom from Zechariah iv. 7. (last clause),—"And he shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it;" and in the afternoon from verse 6th,—"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." In place of a high, small tub of a Pulpit, calculated only to hold two, and a door to fasten them in, we now had one only two feet from the floor, without any doors at all, calculated to hold five or six persons sitting, ranging in front something like a carpenter's bench; the book-board covered with crimson silk-velvet; and the floor with a carpet.

When I had to baptise children in the old house, I had to go down the pulpit stairs, and carry my tumbler of water in my hand; but in the New house we had a silver font fixed on the pulpit, and the parents brought right in front. In place of a low roof, and the gallery not far from the pulpit, we had a high roof, and a gallery a long way back ranged round like an amphitheatre, closely packed with attentive listeners. I found it was, nevertheless, more easy to speak and of course for the audience to hear, than in the old house. There were a few aged members who had seen many changes in the congregation, around whom a new generation had

arisen, with new fashions and manners, who were not so much at home in the new sanctuary as in the old one. They were like the aged worshippers who returned from Babylon, and who, when they saw the second temple wept, and said it was far inferior in their eyes to the old in which they and their fathers worshipped. I have often thought there was much in the following promise, (which was once preached from in the hearing of many) that was fulfilled respecting that portion of God's vineyard in which my lot was cast, and in which I still take a deep interest: "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of Hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts."

When the Lord's Supper was dispensed we had a great many accessions, and a very encouraging and reviving time. On the Monday 13 children were baptized; and when the fathers and mothers were arranged in front of the pulpit with their infants in their arms, taking on themselves the vows,—“To keep up the worship of God in their family evening and morning as God in his providence gave them opportunity, by singing his praise, reading a portion of his Word, and calling on his name; also to be engaged in secret prayer for them and the other members of their families; and that if God should spare their children with them, they would bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; not withholding the rod when it was necessary,” &c.—it was, I say, a very imposing and interesting sight.

In those days, the Thursday before the Sacrament was observed by all as if it had been a Sabbath Day; and on Saturday and Monday they attended regularly and listened to the Word preached. Good Mr. Leiper said, he had been in many congregations during Sacramental occasions, but he had never seen a people turn so well out as they did on preaching days, or who were so well supplied with Bibles and made such use of them in church; for, said he,—“When I gave out my text, nothing could be heard but a rustling among the leaves of their Bibles in order to find out the passage.”

It was in this way they were brought up in the old Meeting-house; and they were resolved not to give it up in the new one. The Methodists had Sermon every afternoon at 3 o'clock, just at the time we commonly came out, and a number of young persons, male and female, made it a regular practice to attend with us and then go to them afterwards; and to accomplish this they would often go out before public worship was over, and in so doing disturb others by their tramping along the gallery and down the stairs. Although complaints were made to me about such conduct I bore with it for some time, until I saw that in place of this practice being given up, matters became worse; when one afternoon, the commotion having commenced, I stopped preaching and said,—“As there are certain individuals who make a regular practice of leaving the house before the close of public worship, causing considerable inattention and confusion, I shall stop for a few minutes for the time to come, in order that such persons may have an opportunity to withdraw.” I then said nothing for a few minutes, when many eyes were turned to see who would rise and go out, but not one moved from his or her seat. This put an end to that practice.

Matters went on encouragingly, and unity and peace prevailed amongst us, and we were not without evidences that the Lord was in the midst of us. Perhaps neither Pastor nor people were duly thankful for the great things the Lord had wrought for us; nor humbled enough for our sins as families and individuals, in the neglect of family duties, or for the formal and careless performance of others; or perhaps we looked more to the hand of man and ascribed more to our own wisdom in what we had done, than to His hand, and His wisdom, power, and goodness who had ordered all things for our good. Whether all or any of these were the cause of God's displeasure with us, and of putting into our hands the cup of affliction, and making us to drink the wine of astonishment, I shall not venture to affirm; but I know there was a *need be* for what came over us, otherwise it never would have taken place. We had scarcely been two years in our place of worship,



when it pleased God to lay me aside from public work in his vineyard by a stroke of paralysis in my left side. The natural cause of this physicians, and others who knew my habits and temperament, said was too much confinement to the house; close study in writing for the press, and preparing my discourses; and not taking exercise enough in the open air: in this I am now disposed to think there was too much truth; and I saw it when it was too late.

As soon as I found that there was little prospect that I should soon be able to resume preaching, I sent to Presbytery a request to supply my pulpit; which they accordingly did, as far as lay in their power, though at times for many Sabbath my people were without Sermon. This they were not accustomed to, for I seldom or never went from home, except once a year to Presbytery, and once in two years to Synod when it met in Philadelphia, and occasionally away on a mission tour to some preaching Stations, such as Delhi and Lansingville. It is not a little singular, that during twenty years I preached twice every Sabbath, except three Sabbaths on which I was prevented by sickness from preaching: although often I appeared in public when very unfit for duty. Many think a minister should never be sick; nor be absent, however much they are so themselves without sufficient cause. I recovered, and by the good hand of God upon me was able to go about; and when a minister came, I was able to attend meeting and take part in public worship. It came to be a question with me and others, whether it would be better to retain my pastoral relation for some time, till it should be seen whether I should become more able to preach again; or whether, for the advantage of the people and my own comfort, it would be better on certain conditions to resign my charge into the hands of Presbytery, let the people pay their own supply, and call another minister.

These two questions occupied our attention, and to decide on them a meeting of the congregation was called, at which it was decided by a large majority that if I would resign my charge, they would pay up all arrear-

ages, and give a Mortgage of \$700 which they held on the Manse and glebe, which they had but lately sold, provided I would give them a receipt in full. To this proposal I finally agreed, because though I could have held on for an indefinite time to my charge, as some of the members of Presbytery and others advised me, yet I saw it would be more conducive to the peace and prosperity of the congregation, for them to look out for another Pastor, than for me to hang on among them, which perhaps might have been the means of scattering and dividing them. Besides, as I had to pay all the supply that came on from the time of my sickness until I was relieved from my charge out of my \$350 of salary, I found that was more than I could long continue to do. I have been the more particular in stating these things here, to show that the \$700 was not given as a gift, as has been generally believed, but as the payment of a debt which they voluntarily bound themselves to pay me on the express condition that I "should resign my charge and give a receipt in full." They having handed to me the mortgage and thus cleared matters in as satisfactory and friendly a manner as could have been expected, I wrote to the Presbytery to that effect; offered the resignation of my charge; and expressed a hope that they would see their way clear to accept it. The following document will show what took place:—

"At a meeting of the Associate Presbytery of Albany on September 28th, 1853, the following resolution; offered by Mr. Hall, was unanimously adopted; and the clerk was directed to transmit a copy to Mr. Graham,—Resolved, that in accepting the resignation of Father Graham, we deplore the dispensation by which he is compelled to resign his charge; that we truly sympathize with him in his affliction; and earnestly pray that his last days may be his best days. 'Help, Lord! for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.'—A true copy. Attested by  
SAMUEL F. MORROW, clerk."

Mr. Morrow, by appointment of Presbytery, preached and declared the pulpit vacant; and in doing so, our young, kind Brother was very much overcome.

During the time I was the Minister of the congregation of Bovina, I explained the verses of the Psalm we were to sing in the morning, which exercise generally occupied twenty minutes; and in this manner I went regularly through the whole of the Psalms and had begun to go through them the second time. I also in the forenoon lectured through the Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John; the Acts of the Apostles; the Epistles to the Ephesians, Hebrews, Philippians, Colossians; four chapters of the Revelation of John; five chapters of Genesis; and had gone as far in the Epistle to the Romans as the xiii. chapter and the 11th verse,—“And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand,” &c,—when God, in His wisdom and love, said, It is enough! These verses were the last I was ever permitted to explain, in my ordinary course of lecturing. I had good reason to believe that the explanation of the Psalm, and the Lecture in the forenoon, were blessed for the edification and instruction of the people. These were a part of the public exercises for which I made all necessary preparation, and in the performance of which I commonly had great liberty, and found much good to my own soul. To the last, I wrote out my sermons and committed them to memory as well as I could; and I never ventured to enter the pulpit without in secret supplicating God’s assistance, and having my manuscript in my pocket. Some of my sermons I transcribed and condensed, and occasionally published in the *Evangelical Repository*; which can be seen in Volumes 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, and 20 of that valuable Periodical; under the signature of “Delaware.”

During the period of my ministry in Bovina congregation, I baptized some four hundred children, and joined in marriage about two hundred couples.

What shall be the results of all that was said and done during those upwards of twenty years of my ministry, the day of final accounts only will disclose.

## CHAPTER VIII.

FROM THE CLOSE OF MY MINISTRY AT BOVINA IN 1853,  
TILL THE PRESENT TIME, 1869.

History of Bovina congregation continued—Call to Mr. J. A. Leiper—His early death—Much regretted—Call to Rev. James B. Lee the present Pastor—Accepted—His ordination—Great prosperity of the congregation under his ministry—The congregations around, which swarmed from that of Bovina—All now flourishing congregations—Bovina “a prolific congregation”—Being now released from its Pastoral charge, considered what I should do—Felt then the Benefit of having a farm and home of our own—Resolved to sell our farm and remove to the Far West—My reluctance to do so—Emigrated to Iowa—Left Bovina in March 1856—Kindness of our friends at parting—Our route—Crossed the Mississippi—Still onward!—Halt at Birmingham—Bought a farm and settled at Winterset, Iowa—Then a godless place—Game and wild beasts abundant—Commenced to break up our prairie land—My health improved—An Associate church had been organized there—Its weak condition—I volunteered to preach to them gratis—Did so for two or three years—Hardships—Desponding feelings—Took courage—Prevalent prejudices against our church principles—Rev. R. J. Hammond sent to preach to us for a time—Account of the Sacrament then observed—Encouraged—Mr. S.’s able preaching—Difference and discussion about the union which had resulted in the United Presbyterian Church—The results—A struggle for life as a congregation—Rev. Mr. McCullough assisted at communion—Rev. C. T. McCaughan preached to us—A call given to him—Accepted—Installed in 1865—Has proved a most successful Pastor—His abundant labours—Extension and prosperity of the United Presbyterian Church at Winterset and in all the region around—Great improvements of the country there since we first came—Reflections on the recent political changes in our country—“The under-ground railroad”—its former operations—now happily unnecessary—Apostrophe to slavery—The history of the anti-slavery movement—Small beginnings

and great results—The War—My sons volunteered at the outset of it—Our parental anxieties for them—All returned safe and sound at the close of the war—Our family meeting and thanksgiving—Good to remember God's gracious dealing with us—His faithfulness to his promise in my own case—The good wish of the Presbytery of Albany in my behalf has been accomplished.

THE congregation gave a unanimous call to Mr. J. A. Leiper to become their Pastor; which, after taking some time to consider, he accepted. He was deeply seated in their affections and they were so in his; both longing for the time for the ordination to take place. But we little know how soon our prosperous state may be turned into vanity. During the summer, the disease Consumption gained on him, so that he had to give up preaching. He went home to his father's house in Pennsylvania; and seeing that he was getting worse, he returned the call which he had received from the people he loved, and cheerfully and resignedly accepted the call from God whom he served so faithfully, "Arise and depart; for this is not your rest!" When the news of his death came, it filled every heart with sorrow, and every habitation with mourning. Such was the way God was pleased to deal with his young servant, who offered, so far, for being useful in that portion of his vineyard; "causing his sun to go down at noon-day;" thus teaching those who were longing for him to be their Pastor, to look for another from the Minister of the upper sanctuary. Mr. Leiper was of a mild, pleasant disposition; retired and unassuming; in company, more given to listen and learn from others than to hear himself speak. His pulpit exhibitions at once impressed any one who heard him, with the conviction that his heart was in his work. There was a plainness and earnestness in his manner which commanded attention, and which were expressed in his look and in the tones of his voice. In gesticulations he was very sparing. No one could listen to him without being impressed with the conviction, that he was habitually living under the influence of those truths which he preached. Though I heard him deliver many excellent discourses with great pleasure, yet there was one which he delivered

to a large assembly who seemed to hang on every word that dropped from his lips, which was long remembered; the text was, 1 Chron. xxviii. 9; "And thou Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek Him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake Him, he will cast thee off for ever."

About a year after the death of Mr. Leiper, they gave a call to Rev. Samuel McArthur; which he declined because it was not harmonious.

In the winter of 1856 they gave a unanimous call to Mr. James B. Lee; which he accepted. I presided on the occasion, and preached from Acts x. 29; "Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?" Mr. Lee having delivered his trial discourses to the intire satisfaction of the Presbytery of Albany, was ordained on the 1st day of August, in the presence of a large assembly collected from different places, all of whom were deeply interested, and felt thankful that, in the good providence of God, "their eyes were once more permitted to see their teacher." Rev. James Thompson, of New York, preached the Ordination sermon, from 2 Cor. v. 20; "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ; as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Rev. Samuel F. Morrow, of Albany, addressed the Pastor; Rev. George M. Hall, of Florida, the people; and Rev. W. J. Cleland, of Delhi, offered up the Ordination prayer, and presided on the occasion. It was a day much to be remembered, during which the power of the Lord was present to heal, comfort, and encourage his people; and which commenced a new era in their history; for which they blessed God and took courage.

About two months after the ordination, the Sacrament of the Supper was dispensed, when 37 persons united with the church. The congregation has prospered remarkably well under Mr. Lee's ministry. They have Prayer-meetings, Bible class, and Sabbath-school,



all of which are well attended; and they pay their Pastor punctually \$1200 annually. They have reported last year 316 members; and the amount collected during the year was \$2655. These, and many other things which might be mentioned, give convincing evidence that the Lord has answered prayers formerly presented in their behalf, and that He has blessed the labours of their present able and highly esteemed Pastor. May love and peace long remain among them; and may they maintain and hand down to their children's children the same precious truths which were taught to them by their fathers!

West Delhi, Lansingville, the majority of Andes, New Kingston, and Walton congregations, all of which are self-sustaining, swarmed from the old hive in Bovina; and still it continues to prosper, and could part with more without missing them. As Rev. James Douglas, a Covenanter, said, after he saw me on a Monday after the Sacrament baptizing 13 children in the new Meeting-house,—“Well sir, I must declare that you have a prolific congregation!”

My pastoral connection with the congregation having been dissolved in a regular and satisfactory manner, we were at a loss for some time to know what was the design of Providence respecting our future movements. We now felt the benefit of having a home of our own, after I was unable to do any thing; and of the family being brought up to work and to help themselves and their parents; in place of being in *the Manse*, out of which we should have had to move, to make room for another. This produced peace of mind, both to parents and children. It is true our beginning was small, and our labours and privations for many years were great, to raise such a large family on such a small salary, in such a genteel manner; yet, by the blessing of God accompanying our efforts, we succeeded far beyond our expectations and those of others. This proves, what I have said already, that ministers, when first ordained, should catch time and opportunities by the forelock, to better themselves; and not let them slip, lest they should have to repent ~~it~~ afterwards.

On consideration, we found that, though our farm was in good repair, well fenced, with two excellent frame barns with stone cellars under them, and an excellent, well-finished, commodious new house on it,—it was too small to employ all the boys working on it, so as to remunerate them for their labour. Some said, let them hire out and work, as others do. To this we never would give our consent, however much some might have liked to see a minister's sons working to them and kept under. Neither were they willing to leave home. We at length made up our minds that, all things taken into consideration, it would be better to sell, and move to the West, where land was cheap, and where the family might have more advantages. I stood out against this a long time, principally on the ground that I was too old and too weak a tree to be pulled up and to be transplanted in a new soil; for I was afraid I would wither and die among their hands before I got that length. In this opinion I was strengthened by others. In that place in those days it was thought to be a remarkable undertaking to go as far as Illinois or Iowa; where, as some said, they had to encounter bears, wolves, rattlesnakes, and Indians. I at last consented, if the family were all agreed to sell and move West, to seek a home beyond the Mississippi, that, Providence permitting, I would not oppose it any longer; although I had my doubts and fears for the consequences as to my health.

After corresponding with several parties in Iowa respecting the prices of land and other things, we sold our homestead. When winding up our affairs and preparing to leave, many of our true and steady friends called to bid us farewell, and gave us unmistakable evidences of their attachment to us. We felt sorry to leave the place where we had been so long; where all our children were born; and where it had pleased God in his providence to deal so mercifully with us all. We left Bovina the last week of March 1856, in sleighs, when the snow-banks were beginning to break through; two kind neighbours, viz. Mr. James Graham of Ormiston, and Mr. Joseph Shaw ~~of~~ Raitt, taking us down

to Delhi, where we took the stage to Hancock; thence the Express train to Woodstock, Canada West, by way of Niagara Falls. Having remained with our relations a week and got rested, we took the cars for Iowa by way of Detroit and Chicago; and crossed the Father of Waters at Burlington on the 18th day of April.

Some strange thoughts arose in my mind the first morning I awoke in Iowa. A quarter of a century had passed away, which appeared only like a dream of the night, since "with my staff I crossed" the Atlantic; and last night when I crossed the Mississippi, "I had become two bands." I thought on that Text I preached my first Sermon from in New York,—“And, behold, I am with thee, in all places whither thou goest;” and how frequently that promise had been made good in my experience.

After breakfast I, along with three of the youngest boys, went down to the River, and looked at the never ceasing flowing waters that had come so many thousands of miles, gliding along until they should find a resting-place in the Gulf of Mexico. I stood with wonder and astonishment at what I saw; and mused on how I came to be there with an awe amounting to something like reverence. I thought on my own feelings then, when afterwards in the newspapers I saw it stated, how Horace Greely when on his way to cross the rocky mountains, on taking his last look of the far-famed River, took off his hat, made a bow, and said, “Farewell, farewell, thou Father of Waters!”

As there was then no railroad in the direction of our route beyond Burlington, we hired a Teamster to take us on to Birmingham, Van Buren Co., two days' ride; where our old acquaintance Rev. Samuel McArthur was then settled. Here we met with many kind brethren belonging to the Associate Church, who showed us no small kindness, and helped us on our way. They were anxious for us to remain amongst them. This we did not feel inclined to do, as we had written on to Mr. William Hastie to look us out a house, and that we would, Providence permitting, follow soon. We then hired a wagon at the rate of \$8 per day and keep

teamster and team. They only know who have experienced it what it is to ride with twelve passengers in wet weather over bad roads, broken bridges, and bottomless sloughs; and to stop over night in mean, comfortless, and expensive taverns, or shanties. After four days' unpleasant travelling by way of Oskaloosa, Knoxville, and Palmyra, we landed, tired and done out, in Mr. William Hastie's, Summerset, Warren Co. Iowa, where we were kindly received and entertained. I found the congregation were almost all from the South of Scotland. They had neither a Meeting-house nor a Minister. I preached to them in an unfinished house once every Sabbath while I remained among them; and by appointment of Presbytery I moderated in a call for Mr. J. B. Lee. The people were very much attached to the doctrines and mode of worship in which they had been brought up; and liberal in the support of the gospel among themselves, and in sending it to others. They were intelligent, sober, and industrious; with well-improved and well-stocked farms, offering fair at no distant day of becoming exceedingly rich; but they were as sheep without a shepherd, and had much need of one to teach them, both by precept and example.

We made several efforts to get a farm there, but, somehow or other, all failed. The fact was, God in his providence had not marked out that place for our residence; therefore we had to move. I learned that there were a few belonging to the Associate Church in or near Winterset, in Madison County. I, along with our eldest son John W., embraced the first opportunity of going to see that place. We liked the appearance of the country, being well supplied with timber and limestone, and well watered. After looking round, we fixed on a farm on the Des Moines road, three miles from Winterset, consisting of 220 acres at \$12 per acre; 20 of which were broken and fenced. It had on it a log house and a log stable, several living springs, 40 acres of the best of timber, a lime kiln in operation, and an inexhaustible supply of limestone and freestone, and good appearance of coal along the bluffs. We also got the crops of ten acres of wheat and ten of corn. We

paid down the gold; had our deed made out and recorded; and got possession about the end of May of our new home in the Far West; which was surrounded with beautiful undulating prairies, on which droves of sheep, oxen, and horses were pasturing, no one knowing where they came from, or to whom they belonged. The Prairie chickens, quails, wild turkies, and rabbits were then in great abundance. During the night the wolves came howling around our house, which made us very much afraid. Although all of us were huddled up in a log cabin eighteen feet by twenty, without any thing above our heads except the rafters and shingles; or any thing beneath our feet except a few loose boards, through which at times we fell; and having only one small window, which held four panes of glass; and no seats but a few benches; yet we were all healthy and happy. We liked the appearance of the country; and felt thankful that God had been pleased to provide for us a habitation once more, after all our wanderings, which we could call our own.

But when the first impressions began to wear away, and we thought of the new commodious house, barns, and orchard we had left, and our many kind Christian friends whose faces we should see no more, *the blues* began to gain among us, and the home-sick fever prevailed to a considerable extent; for which there seemed to be no immediate relief. What tended to produce this state of mind was, our being far removed from religious society, silent Sabbaths, no preaching, nor prayer-meeting, and surrounded with those who made the Lord's Day a day of feasting, idleness, horse-racing, and hunting. It grieved and vexed us to hear the sound of the axe and the crack of the rifle on that blessed day which God had commanded to be remembered and kept holy. Sometimes thoughts arose in our minds, whether we had done wrong, in bringing such a large family away from divine Ordinances, and setting them down in such an out-of-the-way, wild, graceless place; and reflections what might be the consequences if we should be taken away from them; what temptations they should be exposed to through the wicked examples

of those around them; and the risk of their falling in with the dangerous errors of religious doctrine which abounded. In such circumstances as these, it is difficult to determine what course to follow: whether to move away to another place; or to continue, and use what means are within our power to speak and act for our blessed Master. The best way is to pray, and wait, and persevere, and not give up without a fair trial: for I know many good opportunities for raising a congregation in the West have been lost by persons becoming discouraged and moving away to another place; whereas, if they had continued, others would have gathered round them and assisted them. This last course we resolved to follow; although it put our faith and patience more to the test than we ever expected.

We got a breaking team and a breaking plough, and the boys set to work and tore up the beautiful prairie, and turned up the black loam to the sun, that had remained unseen, perhaps since the days of Noah; and then split rails, fenced it, sowed it with wheat, and planted it with corn next year. The boys were both able and willing to work, and we soon had a good farm, and a better house, together with a good stock of sheep, hogs, and horned cattle.

My health which many said would certainly fail, and of which I had my fears, gradually improved far beyond our expectations, occasioned by the change of climate and mode of living, together with peace of mind and exercise among the wild prairie flowers, and the pleasant smell arising from the virgin soil being broken up around us; so much so that I thought I could preach occasionally. An organization in connection with the Associate Presbytery of Iowa had been effected about a year before we came, consisting of eight members, who were generally in moderate circumstances, beginning to improve their land. After becoming acquainted with them, and having found them in a weak and discouraged condition, I told them that if they could obtain any place in Winterset to meet in, I should, as long as my health permitted, preach to them in the forenoon of every Sabbath without any fee or reward. This I



did for two or three years, pretty regularly, except in the stormy days of winter; and had every reason to believe that the Head of the church was pleased to bless our feeble endeavours in keeping his friends together until others "came to His help against the mighty." In doing this I often had to preach in unfinished houses (the immigration was so great that every small room or hut was full); and not unfrequently when we had no place to meet in I preached to them out of doors. We met with no small opposition from several quarters, and were looked upon as persons who belonged to a sect every where spoken against, and who advocated strange doctrines on slavery, communion, psalmody, and secret societies; which they declared to our face never would make progress in that place: and I must confess that frequently, when hard bestead, I was disposed to think they were not mistaken. But God was for us, and the gates of hell could not prevail against us. If we were few, we were united and determined to stand our ground; and although our enemies were many, our hearts were one. It never will meet with divine approbation, either in this world or in that which is to come, to be like

"The sons of Ephraim, who nor bows  
Nor other arms did lack;  
Whenas the day of battle was,  
They faintly turned back;"

but we should be resolved to abide by the cause of Christ, whatever reproach or persecution we may in consequence be exposed to. In doing this, we have many great and precious promises given in God's Word for our encouragement.

In June 1856, Rev. R. J. Hammond was sent by the Associate Presbytery of Iowa to preach to us for a few Sabbaths and dispense the Lord's Supper. This he did, and was the means of encouraging our hearts and strengthening our hands in the good work of the Lord. The following account of that occasion appeared in the *Evangelical Repository*, Vol xv. pp. 281-2: "It

was a time of refreshing, not only to the twelve communicants who sat down under their Redeemer's shadow with great delight, but also to many others who worshipped with us, especially to our brethren of the Associate Reformed Church, who rejoiced in all that was said and done. We believe it was the first time the Lord's Supper was ever dispensed in connexion with the Associate Church so far west of the Mississippi; and it is hoped the same and other ordinances of grace will not only be enjoyed by us in time to come, but also by others farther west, and north, and south of us, where the Great Shepherd shall seek out and bring together his wandering sheep. It was our intention, before leaving Bovina, to endeavour, if possible, to locate the family within the bounds of one of our congregations where they had a settled minister; but it appears the Lord designed it otherwise. I thought, as the shadows of the evening were lengthening out, that ease and retirement were most adapted to me; but He has thought otherwise, by strengthening me beyond all expectation, and locating me in a place where my feeble services and advice are occasionally required and appreciated."

I have lived to see the United Presbyterian Church extending her influence, by having ministers settled in flourishing congregations far to the south, north, east, and west of us.

Our cause, though opposed, gradually increased by immigration, so that we were able to pay for supply. When the Union took place in 1858, we had Mr. S—— appointed to us for a year, with the understanding that we were to call him to be our Pastor; than whom, in my opinion, no one has yet been amongst us, who ever came up to him, for an earnest, practical, impressive preacher. At this time we were in a prosperous condition, and promised fair to become a large congregation: but we had to meet with adversity, and to have our faith and patience tried.

It was soon discovered that there was a diversity of opinion existing among us respecting the union which had taken place; and in order to come to some decision

what we were to do, a meeting of those in full communion was called, when, after a full expression of sentiment *pro* and *con*, had taken place, during which considerable warmth of feeling was manifested, especially by Mr. S., who opposed the union, and who, among other things said, in some of his raptures,—“I am determined to oppose this union, and shall never be led on, or borne down, by any little Scotchman,” I remember of rising cool and collected, and saying with some firmness,—“Ah, Mr. S. the little Scotchman is not afraid of a bold Irishman; and if you will only keep quiet for a little while, he will cut your arguments all to pieces.” It was agreed that I should call the roll and ascertain who were for and who were against the Union; when the vote stood 27 in favour of it and 13 against it. Mr. S. along with the minority withdrew, constituted, and called themselves the Associate Presbyterian congregation of Winterset; elected trustees, made out a deed for the church lot, and claimed it as their own.

This was rather a critical time with us, and it looked as if we were to be entirely broken up; of which I was not without fears. Mr. S. who was a popular preacher, drew the people after him, and left us much weakened and discouraged. Seeing that if we did not stand our ground, and do something to keep together, we might repent of it afterwards, I accordingly, though not very fit for it, gave out that we who were favourable to the Union should meet in our usual place of worship; and that I would preach for them till one was sent by Presbytery to take my place. This had the effect of keeping them together, and though our audiences were small, it manifested to our opponents that we were resolved to cling together, and not, as they said, “be scattered to the four winds.” From the Associate Reformed side we got an addition of two elders and ten members; and lost three elders, worthy men, two trustees, and eight members; leaving us one elder, one trustee, and twenty five members.

I held a meeting, of Session, at which it was agreed we should have the Lord’s Supper dispensed, and that

I should write on to get Mr. McCullough to assist; who was then by appointment preaching at Indianola. He came, and did all the preaching; at which I thought he was very good: and I distributed the elements, baptized the children, &c. This was a memorable occasion; and, by the divine blessing, we became more united and encouraged. Mr. S. moved to Ohio, and those who adhered to him went away also to other places; while we held on our way, and waxed stronger and stronger. For years after, we had a great many changes and discouragements, often being six or seven months without any preaching when I became unable to preach; none of the least was the disappointment we met with in Mr. D. returning our call to Presbytery after he had accepted it and had sent on word to look out a house for him as he was soon coming amongst us. As neither he nor any member of Presbytery even condescended to assign any reason for such unchristian treatment, we were left to our own conjectures what were the reasons. Sometimes we ascribe our change of mind and conduct to the will of Providence when it originates in our own depraved hearts, from the love of money, or something else. It is said of the worthy Rev. Ebenezer Erskine, that when he had accepted a call to go to Stirling, one of his parishioners met him and accosted him in the following manner,—“Weel, Mr. Erskine, what mak’s ye think o’ leaving the godly parish o’ Portmoak whar ye ha’e sae mony seals o’ yer ministry, and gang awa’ to that graceless toon o’ Sterlin’ whar Satan has his seat?” “A call in providence, Effie,” answered Mr. Erskine, “you know, must be attended to.” “Indeed, sir, let me tell you,” quoth Effie, “if it had not been the love o’ a bigger steepend, and to get awa’ amang the gentry, ye wad ha’e turned the deafest side o’ yer head, and let providence ca’, and ca’, until it was tired ca’ing.”

The Rev. C. T. McCaughan preached to us in 1864 for five Sabbaths, and visited every person and family belonging to the congregation; and afterwards he received a unanimous call, which he accepted. He was installed in August 1865. He has proved a devoted

and diligent pastor; whose honest, sociable, and gentlemanly conduct has done much to raise the character of the congregation, and gain us many friends from outsiders. The congregation has prospered under his ministry, having doubled its numbers since he came among us; and we have had a Meeting-house of our own erected, which is now out of debt, and which is allowed to be the largest, best planned, and best finished house in the county. Ever since he came, Mr. McC. has invariably made it his practice to preach in Winterset in the forenoon, and in the afternoon go eight, ten, or twelve miles out into the country, summer or winter, fair weather or foul, to preach in School-houses, where a few United Presbyterians were found. The consequence of these exertions has been, that three of those stations have been organized into congregations, and a fourth offers soon to follow their example.

Thus we have lived to see our Church, from very small beginnings, extending her influence in this and other adjoining Counties and States where the advocates of Infidelity, Socinianism, Arminianism, and many other systems of error are numerous and zealous; for which we have great reason to bless God and take courage. May others arise when we shall have served our generation and by the will of God fallen asleep in Jesus, and stand up faithfully for the principles and practice of the United Presbyterian church as witnessed for in their Testimony; and be instrumental in holding them fast, and handing them down to generations yet unborn! We should not be discouraged and “despise the day of small things,” and say,—Why wait we any longer? we shall never have a congregation and a minister here; let us sell out, and move to some other place!—but we should keep on steadily in the path of duty, and make use of whatever means we have within our reach; and if we do so we shall see that God has not been inattentive to our prayers, and that “our labour has not been in vain in the Lord.”

The face of society and of the country has intirely changed since we came west in 1856. Thousands of acres of land that were then lying waste without inhabi-

tant are now in the highest state of improvement, with good dwelling-houses, school-houses, barns, fences, and flourishing orchards in almost every place you can go to. None who have not witnessed the rapid growth of a new country would ever believe it unless they saw it with their own eyes.

Times and things are changed. When we came here, and for years after, especially during the rebellion, *the under-ground railroad* (in which I was a share-holder and office-bearer,) did a very extensive business; so much so, that additional *night-trains* had to be put on in order to accommodate the passengers: but when the Company broke up for want of employment after the war was over, and the books were balanced, all the share-holders and officers felt amply rewarded for all the money, time, and labour they had bestowed on the undertaking. Now, no wanderer who had fled at the risk of his life from a land of bondage is seen crossing Middle River at some secret place after sun-down when all is still; and trudging along the prairie, looking behind him to see whether his pursuers were not on his track; with all he possessed on earth tied up in a coarse dirty clout; coming to our humble habitation and inquiring if "Oul massa —— lived in dis house?" O thou cursed system of iniquity, injustice, and oppression! thou "hast come to a perpetual end!" The God of Justice has listened to the groanings of the prisoners and sent them deliverance. Happy are we who have lived to see our prayers answered, and our feeble endeavours in behalf of the down-trodden and oppressed crowned with success; and who have been permitted to witness the last fragment of that villainous system, slavery, taken up and dashed against the stones! Oh, what a glorious change has taken place!—the Jubilee trumpet proclaiming liberty to all the inhabitants of the land! Four millions of human beings of the race of Adam who were formerly bought and sold, and treated like brute beasts in our far-famed land, which had declared that "all men are born free and equal,"—made free, and never again to return to bondage!

Well do I remember, when the Liberty Party, or



friends of the slave, put up James G. Birney as a candidate for President, in opposition to Henry Clay the great advocate of slavery, himself a slave-holder, of writing out a Ticket in favour of the oppressed, and of dropping it into the ballot box; I being the only person in our Township who dared attempt such a thing. Those were the days when "on the side of the oppressor there was power;" when the friends of the slave were few, despised, and looked upon as troublesome, seditious persons; often mobbed and "tarred and feathered;" and when John Quincy Adams, the Lovejoys, and many others in and out of Congress, at the risk of their lives, "opened their mouth in behalf of the dumb." But He who is "wonderful in counsel and excellent in working, all whose works are truth, and whose ways are judgment," has brought deliverance in a time and manner which had never entered the heart of man to conceive. The oppressors were permitted to form their own plans, and make the snares with which their own feet were caught. The rebellion into which they entered in order to extend and perpetuate human bondage, was the very means of entirely abolishing it. Well may we say,—“The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad!”

The time of the war was a very trying and troublesome time for us. While our sons had to go South and fight the rebels, we who remained at home, old and young, were insulted and abused by those northern rebels with whom we were surrounded. When the first call for men was issued by President Abraham Lincoln, two of our sons and our son-in-law left the harvest field and inlisted in the First Iowa Cavalry and took their own horses with them, and about a year after, another son inlisted in that same regiment. Poor fellows! we cheerfully parted with them, to assist in putting down that wicked and uncalled for rebellion; though we entertained little hope of ever seeing them return alive. None can tell except those who have experienced it, how many thoughtful days and sleepless nights parents had to endure, when their sons were away in the war, not knowing but the next mail might

bring the melancholy tidings that they had been killed. However great the trial was to part with them, we felt thankful that we had sons who were both able and willing to go and fight in defense of the liberties of their country. We had great reason to bless God that, while thousands never returned, we had our fears disappointed and our hopes exceeded; for, after one of them had served three years, and the others had continued in the service six months after the war was ended, they all returned in safety, after having been in many severe battles, and endured many long and dangerous marches through the rebel States, in Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas, and other places.

I had the satisfaction of seeing our seven sons and three daughters, with our son-in-law and four granddaughters, all in good health, in our new house; when I engaged in prayer with them: thanking the Father of all our mercies for all His kindness shown to us; for the way He had led and fed us all our life long; especially for answering our prayers in preserving those of us who had been on the fields of battle, and restoring them safe and sound, once more to see the faces of each other. I prayed that we might all be found united by faith to Christ Jesus now: and if we should never all meet again in this world, that we might all meet on the great day of accounts on the right hand of "the Great Shepherd of the sheep," and hear him say to us,—  
 "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world!" It was an impressive meeting, both to old and young; all seemed deeply affected. And what made it the more solemn was, that I was then in a very poor state of health, apparently soon to enter the eternal world; and what I said came from my heart, and as if I were soon to see them no more.

It is good for us to "remember all the way the Lord has led us in the wilderness, to prove us, and to try us, and to see whether we will abide by His ways, or not." I feel thankful to the Father of all my mercies, for sparing me so long on his footstool, who deserved to have been cut down as a cumberer of the ground; for

bearing me up to hoary hairs; and carrying me through so many dangers and difficulties. I have been permitted to see all the family grown up; most of them members of the United Presbyterian Church; conducting themselves with becoming propriety; four of them married, doing well, in comfortable circumstances in homes of their own. I have "seen my children's children, and peace on Israel." "May the Angel that hath fed and led me all my life long bless the lads!" I have every reason to believe that the following divine Promise has been verified in my happy experience,—“I will be a God unto you, and to your seed after you:”—“The promise is to you and to your children.”

The Presbytery of Albany, when they loosed me from my charge of the Congregation of Bovina sixteen years ago, expressed a wish that “my last days might be my best days;” and I do believe that prayer has been answered.

## APPENDIX.

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### I.

I have deemed it proper to give a few extracts from some of the letters of those worthy men who took such a deep interest in me when I was in my native land, and also when I came to this country. A more full and particular notice of these eminent servants of Christ I have written in the *Evangelical Repository* Vol. xx. Nos. 4. 6. and 7. under the title of "Reminiscences." I have often indulged in the desire, respecting them, which Rev. Alexander Peden expressed, when he lay prostrate on the barren heath at Airmoss, where lay the headless and handless body (both having been cut off and stuck up in Edinburgh) of that faithful servant and distinguished martyr Rev. Richard Cameron,—  
*"Oh to be wi' Ritchie!"*

#### I.—FROM REV. GEORGE STEVENSON D.D.

Rev. Dr. Stevenson, of Ayr, author of "The Offices of Christ," "Dissertations on the Atonement," &c. writes:  
 Ayr, March 4th. 1834.

Rev. Dear Brother:

"I should begin with a long apology to you for not answering your kind letter sooner. Indeed, I had begun a letter for you long ago, and always delayed

sending it, till I should receive an official account of the decision of your Synod of 1832. It has never yet come to hand, and I am afraid matters are not so favorable as was expected. It is owing to this circumstance that you have not heard officially from us. The Committee appointed to correspond with your Committee always waited for some communication from them. This is the only reason they have not heard from us long ago. We have, indeed, very little to communicate. Things are going on here, at least with us, in their usual way. The Lord removed from us on 26th September last our worthy Brother Mr. McDerment. This was a heavy stroke to us, and particularly to his family and congregation; but it becomes us to say,—‘The will of the Lord be done!’ The Professor (Paxton) is now become very feeble, and his congregation a good deal reduced as to numbers; and they do not seem to agree about an assistant.

“It gives us great pleasure to hear that you are doing so well. I hope every thing remains comfortable between you and the congregation. Have you got married yet? If so, you must give my best respects to your better half. Our family are in their ordinary. Those at home join in best respects to you. I have sent you a copy of my *Treatise on the Offices of Christ*. You will see that I have attacked some of your American divines: with what success I leave you to judge. You must not, however, reprint it in America without letting me know, as it would need some corrections. I suppose, however, there will be no demand for it in that quarter. It has done better here than I expected. I printed 1250 copies, and I suppose they are nearly all sold.

“I will be glad to hear from you soon. Give me all your Church news. I hope you are still appearing boldly for the good old cause, and with success. You must excuse the shortness of this letter. I have been so much engaged with the pen for some time past, that it is a burden to me to resume the task: besides, it will take you a number of letters to send me as much in writing as I have sent you in print!—With sincere wishes for your success in the work of our common

Master, I am, Rev. and Dear Brother, Yours affectionately,

George Stevenson."

This good man laboured diligently and faithfully in his Master's service for some years after I parted with him; when he was seized with apoplexy in the pulpit during the time of preaching; which, five years afterwards, terminated in his death. His son, who was settled in Kilwinning, Ayrshire, wrote me a long and interesting account of his father's death; from which I give the following extract:—

"Kilwinning, June 14th 1841.

"Rev. Dear Friend: Perhaps ere this letter reach you you may have heard the melancholy tidings of my father's last illness and death: but knowing that you and my father corresponded, and that you felt a deep interest in him, I take up the pen to give you a few particulars. Knowing my father as you did, it were needless for me to expatiate on his excellencies, which endeared him to us while he lived, and now cause us to sorrow the more when dead. But we have withal many, very many considerations, that should alleviate our grief. He was spared to a good old age; yet did not outlive his usefulness. Often had he wished that he might be continued at his post in the sanctuary below until, like Aaron, he should be called up to the sanctuary on high; and God granted him the desire of his heart. While he could speak, his language was that of resignation and hope. He dwelt much on the great and undeserved goodness of God to him; and his soul followed hard after God. Even after the power of speech had failed, by the motions of the hand and expressions of the countenance, it was evident the mind was generally capable of acting, and that the exercises of religion were still his delight. He seemed to feel special delight in the duty of praise; and on the Thursday before his death, as we were singing by his bedside these lines of his favourite Psalm,—'God is our refuge and our strength,' &c., he caused us raise him up in his bed, and made several attempts to join, in which he partly succeeded. But oh, how different now!



Then, indeed, the spirit was willing, but the lips were powerless: but now, we trust, he is raising the glorious, new, and eternal song,—‘Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever! Amen.’ Till within two days of his death, our hopes and fears as to the issue alternately prevailed. At last, hope gave way: he gradually sank; the oppression of breathing increased; the eyes continued closed; and consciousness seemed gone; when, at last, the storm settled down into a calm, and, without a struggle or a groan, he fell asleep in Jesus. His latter end was thus, even more than usual, peace. He rests from his labours; and, we trust, has received that crown of life which fadeth not away.

“Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain, Rev. and Dear Brother, Yours truly,

George Stevenson.”

## II.—FROM PROFESSOR PAXTON.

Rev. George Paxton, D. D., Professor of Divinity to the Associate Synod of Original Seceders; author of “Illustrations of the Holy Scriptures from the Geography, Natural History, and Customs and Manners of the East,” &c, writes:—

“Edinburgh, 27th Feb. 1833.

“Rev. Dear Brother:—You will long ere now be putting me down as a very forgetful friend; and I must confess that appearances are all against me. But appearances are not the same as realities, and so it is here. Since you left us I have been at the grave’s mouth, by a flow of blood to the head; which disabled me for any kind of exertion, and more especially for writing. It is now twelve months since it seized me, and it is not quite removed, though greatly better. I am now preaching again, and all the Sabbath: only I am reduced to English measure instead of Scotch! I am still very bad at writing as you will see, but I cannot let the Rev. Mr. Goodwillie leave this country without sending a letter by him. As it is the first, so in all probability it may be the last, for I am very weakly.

“We rejoice you had a safe voyage, and that you managed so well in pushing your way into the American church. It gives me great satisfaction that you exerted yourself so manfully for the truth and the right in their Synod, and that your efforts were, by God’s blessing, crowned with so much success. I hope you will set your face like a flint for the Covenanted cause, and refuse to be ashamed. You have begun well: continue in well-doing, till you get the crown. I hope the great Head of the Church, since he has put you into the ministry, will bless you and make you a blessing to all around you.

“We are fighting away here after the old fashion. The Established Church and the United Secession and other Dissenting bodies are trying to pull down one another, and great is the uproar and bitter the strife. Agreeably to our principles, our Church, the Cameronians, and the Old-Light Burghers are contending for repairing the Auld Kirk and keeping her up. I think we shall beat them. The Church people are loudly demanding the repeal of the law of Patronage, and I hope they will succeed in their endeavours. Pamphlets on both sides are flying about us as thick as hail.

“Your former acquaintances are all well, and glad to hear of your prosperity. In writing this small letter I have been compelled to take several rests; I must therefore draw to a conclusion. Remember me in your prayers: I need them much; for I am just about done. Mrs. Paxton joins me in kind regards to you. Write me at your leisure. I shall like to hear from you, though I may not be able to answer.—I am, Rev. and Dear Brother, Yours very sincerely,

George Paxton.”

The last letter I received from him was dated June 5th, 1835; in which he wrote:—“I am alive yet and that is all; exceedingly feeble and useless. The tendency of blood to the head still goes on, and requires cupping every two months or so, ten ounces at a time; and it is more than probable you will soon hear of my death. Pray for me, dear Sir, that the change may be glorious.” This was the last I ever heard from my

warm-hearted and unflinching friend, who took such a deep interest in me from the first time we became acquainted. Shortly after writing the above letter he fell asleep in Jesus and entered into his rest. Few such burning and shining lights have appeared in the Secession Church.

———"Sure the last end  
Of the good man is peace: How calm his ~~exit~~!  
Night dews fall not more gently on the ground,  
Nor weary worn-out winds expire so soft."

### III.—FROM REV. DR. MCCRIE.

The following letters are from the Rev. Thomas McCrie, D. D., author of "the Lives of Knox and Melville," &c. &c.

I may premise, that in them and in the other letters, there is a reference to the meeting of Synod held in Philadelphia in May 1832, when it was finally decided to approve of the Testimony of the Original Seceders in Scotland, and recognize them as a sister church. At that as well as other meetings no small amount of prejudice and bitterness against the measure was manifested, principally by those very men who were born in Scotland and educated in and licensed by the Secession church, and who were afterwards sent out to this country as her missionaries. Though I was not then a member of the Court and therefore had no right to speak, permission was given me to deliver my sentiments, in order to give correct information on certain points about which there appeared to be a difference of opinion. This I did to the utmost of my ability: with which the friends of the Original Seceders expressed themselves highly pleased. I wrote Dr. McCrie and Professor Paxton what was said against them by those who seemed to be strongly under the influence of prejudice; and that among other mis-statements which they made were the following, viz: That there was no use of trying to approve of the Original Seceders, for it was well known that they were preparing to unite with the

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Covenanters; and, as a proof of this, they had designedly kept out of their Testimony the views held by the Secession church from her commencement respecting *Common benefits*, as not being among the things purchased by the death of Christ. The reader will see, with interest, what that master in Israel, Dr. McCrie, said on these points. His sentiments are well worthy of being preserved, for the benefit of some future historian who may write a history of the rise and progress of the Secession church in this country—which is still a desideratum.

“Edinburgh, 7th August 1832.

“Rev. and Dear Brother:—I have had the pleasure of perusing your late letter to Mr. Stevenson, in which, *inter alia*, you express a more than ordinary desire to possess a copy of ‘True Patriotism,’ by Mr. Bruce. Wishing to gratify you in this, I have procured a copy, which I now send. This is the immediate cause of my writing at present. With all your friends here I rejoiced in the kindness of Providence in carrying you safe across the great waters, securing you a favourable reception, and providing you so soon with a situation in which you have so good a prospect of comfort and usefulness.

“As an individual, I rejoice with a special joy in the exertions you have made to spread the knowledge of Reformation principles, and to remove prejudices and reproaches against it and its friends. In this respect you have answered to the full all the hopes I had formed of you; for, though you used to say you would be prudent and quiet, I knew your Scottish Presbyterian spirit would be ‘stirred within you’ when you heard the jeers and mis-representations with which it was attempted to run down the good cause, and to make even its friends ashamed of it. I desire, with you, to be thankful to Him who prepares both the way and the heart of man, and whose is also ‘the answer of the tongue,’ for sending you so opportunely to your present abode, and making you instrumental in bringing our brethren to so desirable a conclusion as that to which they have come, at their last meeting of Synod

in Philadelphia. You can easily conceive that I read your account to Mr. Paxton with feelings of deeper interest in some respects, than any of my brethren. I trust you shall have your reward in the best way, and in that which shall be most to your heart's content—increasing usefulness as a preacher of the everlasting gospel; and in the spiritual prosperity of the flock over which you are by this time set as a Pastor.—The names of the brethren who stood forward in defense of the principles of the church of Scotland and the Secession, as given by you, are dear to me on that account. Particularly, I feel gratified that those of Professor Ramsey and Mr. Beveridge (the son, I suppose, of the late Mr. Beveridge of Cambridge) were among the number.

“The family are all well, and often speak of you; so are, and so do, all your acquaintances in this place. And now I must have done, with saying, that it will give me great pleasure to hear from you. If there are any of my writings which you have a desire to possess, let me know it. Mrs. McCrie desires to be kindly remembered to you; also Messrs. Shaw and Murray, who are with me.—I remain, My dear sir, Yours sincerely,  
Thomas McCrie.”

“Edinburgh, April 1st 1833.

“Rev. and Dear Brother:—Your favour of February 18th arrived on Saturday, and was a welcome guest. It took, however, half an hour from my Sabbath preparation, as I could not resist the temptation of perusing it at the moment. It gives me great pleasure to hear that you are so comfortably settled, that your health continues good, and that your spirits are if any thing better than ever. Long may they continue so! You must not be too severe in your construction of the silence of your friends on this side of the waters. Mind the distance, and the dangers by the way. You were nearly *engulfed* yourself; and many a Packet, if not sunk by lead affixed to it, has been torn in pieces by the waves. For example, I wrote you in the beginning of August last along with a copy of (what you seem as eager for as Esau was for the *blessing*). ‘Curse ye

Meroz,' and you had not received it at the date of your letter. Again, Mr. William Whytock wrote you some time after, with a copy of the Review of Orme, and this also had not reached you; yet the feelings you express are very natural, and none who considers your situation, and the kindness of your heart, will be either surprised or offended at the way in which you write. There are some people who, like a certain class of animals, are formed for burrowing in the earth; and it matters not to them, if they have wherewith to cover and feed them, whether others recollect them or not; or whether their former acquaintance are breathing, or sleeping under the clod. There are others who have *hearts*, but then they are too sensitive; and they either feel dispirited under neglect, or they wax wroth, and talk of revenge. But enough of this.

"You have not mentioned the time at which your Synod meets, and I am afraid a letter sent from our Synod (which is to meet on May 14th,) may be too late. As you are anxious to hear from us on a certain point (and I think your anxiety is not without reason,) I judge it better to answer your letter without delay. I know no other reason for the omission of an express condemnation, in our Testimony, of the doctrine of Christ's *purchasing common benefits* (as they are called), but that we did not think it was a prevailing error, and that we thought the Cameronians had dropped or become cool on that peculiarity. Perhaps we were mistaken as to the fact.

"My sentiments as to 'Common benefits' are the very same with those stated in 'Gib's Display,' and in the American Testimony; and I have every reason to believe that those of *all* my brethren are the very same. It is a point that never was called in question among us, and about which we never felt any difficulty, and never perceived the slightest jarring of sentiment or shade of difference among us. I have heard, indeed, some good, honest private Christians among the Anti-burghers, from my earlieat years, occasionally, *in asking a blessing*, beg [on the ground of] 'a covenant right to these mercies.' I dare say they used it very inno-



cently, but it is a phrase I never employed. As to the Cameronians" (Covenanters), "I am less acquainted with them than any other religious denomination in Scotland; I mean personally. I have always been disposed to think, that they contain a reasonable number of serious, good living people, attached to Presbytery, and zealous for the Reformation, according to their views. I speak of what they *were*, rather than of what they *are*. But as to Cameronianism itself, my decided opinion is, and always has been, that it is a *caricature* of Reformation principles; that it is at variance with the plainest and most explicit declarations of the word of God; and that it necessarily, almost, involves its professions [professors?] in glaring inconsistencies.

"I think that those who know that Mr. Turnbull (formerly of Ayton) was a zealous member of our body, even though they never saw or heard of Mr. Bruce's Tract on the subject—'The Difference between those calling themselves Old Dissenters and other Presbyterians, on the head of Magistracy'—might be ashamed of expressing a suspicion of our sentiments on this head, or of reviving a charge which was recklessly advanced in this country at a moment [of] excitation, but never since repeated, nor, as far as I know, believed by a single individual here. But much allowance must be made for the difficulty which brethren in America feel in obtaining correct information, and their liability to be imposed on by partial reports.

"I am glad you are on good terms with Mr. Laing. He is capable of being of great use to you. Few men, according to all that I know and have been told, are better acquainted with the gospel. I recollect well the interest with which I used to hear him when I was a boy, though I was capable of reaping little benefit, having been removed from his ministry when I became a student. Give my best respects to him, and let him know that his son is doing well at Colmonell, [in Ayrshire]. The churches of England and Ireland are in a tottering state; and that of Scotland is not free of all danger. A considerable number of ministers and members of the latter are making attempts at reform, par-

ticularly by getting rid of Patronage; but the greater part, including orthodox ministers, will content themselves with propping up the edifice, and giving its wall a little white-washing. We live in uncommon times; and who can say what will be the end of these wonders? —I must now have done. Mrs. Mc Crie and the family join with me in cordial salutations; and with every good wish, I am, Rev. and Dear Brother, Yours affectionately,

Thomas Mc Crie."

About two years after writing the above, this eminent servant of Christ was called away from his labours in behalf of the cause of truth to his rest above, in the 63rd, year of his age and the fortieth of his ministry. His earthly remains were followed by a procession amounting, it was said, to nearly 1500 persons, including the Magistrates of the City of Edinburgh, and the Clergymen of all Denominations, to the Greyfriars Church-yard, there to mingle with the dust of thousands of those who suffered for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, during the cruel Popish and Prelatic persecutions. For an interesting and full and particular account of this remarkable man, and of his writings and times, the reader is referred to his life, written by his son, Rev. Thomas Mc Crie, D.D. the younger, and published by Mr. William S. Young, Philadelphia.

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## II.

A BRIEF SKETCH OF REV. ANDREW ARNOT, one of the first Missionaries of the Associate church of Scotland to this country.

Having in my "Autobiography and Reminiscences" made mention of having often preached in Mr. Arnot's pulpit at Midholm, Scotland, and become acquainted

with several of his relatives, I have thought that a brief sketch of that proto-Missionary of the Associate church might not be unworthy of being put on record.

Mr. Arnot was born in 1722, in the Parish of Portmoak, Kinross-shire, Scotland, and brought up under the ministry of Rev. Ebenezer Erskine, one of the principal leaders in the formation of the Secession church. His father died when he was young, leaving a widow with two sons and a daughter. Andrew, being the eldest, was hired out to work and to depend on his own resources for a living. It was soon discovered by those who became acquainted with him, that he possessed, for one of his age, an uncommon degree of decision of character and determination of purpose, and capacity for acquiring and seeking after knowledge. Mr. Erskine and others took a deep interest in him, and encouraged him to prosecute his studies with a view to the ministry, and they raised money from time to time to defray his expenses, both at School and College. Having gone through a regular classical and theological course of studies, he was taken on trial and licensed by the Presbytery of Kinross; and when about thirty years of age he accepted a call from the Associate congregation of Midholm, and was regularly ordained and installed in 1752. He had been settled for only two years, when Synod appointed him and Rev. Alexander Gellatly (Mr. G. having been previously ordained for that end) to go as Missionaries to America. Several very urgent petitions had been sent to the Synod at different times, by those belonging to the Associate church who had emigrated to Lancaster and Chester counties, Pennsylvania, beseeching them to send two or more missionaries to break among them the bread of life, and afford them the opportunity of having their children brought up in the fear of God, and taught to sing the same Songs of Zion in a foreign land which they and their fathers had been accustomed to do in their native land. None of the young men seemed willing to undertake such a long and dangerous voyage, and to endure the privations and hardships incident to a new country: therefore these petitions lay on the

table of Synod year after year unanswered. At one of the meetings of the Synod, in Edinburgh, when those petitions were read, and methods were proposed and discussed how they could comply with them, Mr. Arnot advocated the cause of the petitioners with considerable warmth of feeling, and insisted that assistance should be immediately sent to them; and, in no very measured terms, in his accustomed blunt manner, denounced the young men who were licensed, for their timidity, and want of zeal in promoting their Master's interest, and of earnest concern for the salvation of sinners. One of the members who seemed to think Mr. Arnot had been too severe in his censures on the young men, rose and apologized for them, and then appealed to him whether, if he were in their situation, he thought he would be willing to leave his native land and all that was near and dear to him, and run the risk of crossing the Atlantic, and sojourn among strangers in a foreign land. Mr. Arnot rose and in a decided manner replied, that had it not been that he had the charge of a large congregation, he would have gone to that distant land "to the help of the Lord against the mighty" without the least reluctance; and that even now he was willing to go for a limited time, providing Synod would engage to supply his pulpit regularly during his absence, and see that the sick be visited and catechizing attended to.

They cheerfully accepted his offer; and he, along with one of his elders (a blacksmith by trade) and Mr. Gellatly soon took their departure, and, after a somewhat tedious voyage, landed safe, and found their way to their place of destination; where they were gladly received, as messengers sent over by God to their help in answer to their prayers. Shortly after commencing their labours in that important field, they, according to instructions given by Synod, constituted themselves into a Presbytery, and assumed the name of "The Associate Presbytery of Pennsylvania, subordinate to the Synod of Edinburgh." These two were the first ministers, and this was the first Presbytery constituted in this country in connection with the Secession church;

and which afterwards gave rise to the late Associate and Associate Reformed Synods, which united in 1858, and now form, "The United Presbyterian church of North America."

The most virulent opponents our missionaries met with were the Presbyterians, who did every thing in their power, both from pulpit and press, to prevent their success; and the Presbytery of Newcastle even went the length of publishing a Warning to their people to be on their guard against their dangerous doctrine and schismatic measures. This was ably answered in a large Pamphlet, principally written by Mr. Arnot, in which he and his brethren vindicated their principles in a masterly manner from the false charges brought against them; and showed that as they never had been in connection with the Presbyterians in this country, they could never be justly charged with separating from them.

Mr. Arnot, after remaining two years, during which he laboured hard, returned to Scotland, along with his elder, and left Mr. Gellatly; who was shortly after joined by Revs. James Proudfit, Matthew Henderson, and John Mason, who were sent out also by the Synod. Mr. Arnot was of great service in inducing ministers and others to emigrate to this country. He died on May 18th, 1803, in his 81st year, after having been fifty one years in Midholm. He left two sons and a daughter. His eldest son, Andrew, inherited his father's farm; and his younger son came to this country, and lived and died in York, Pennsylvania. He was a physician. Mr. A. left several bound volumes of Manuscript Sermons carefully and closely written, without any erasures or interlineations; and when I read some of them in 1829, in the very apartment in which they were written, even then they were remarkably distinct. They manifested that he took great pains in preparing for the pulpit, and did not serve the Lord with that which cost him nought.

His sermons were doctrinal, clear, and comprehensive; and their applications long, pointed, practical, and solemn: showing a metaphysical turn of mind, and

an originality of thinking. He was an able, conscientious, and faithful minister of the gospel; not shunning to declare the whole counsel of God; seeking not his own but the honour of his Master. In the early period of his ministry, the Secession church was blessed with many fearless and faithful watchmen placed on her walls. Then, she "looked forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible to her enemies as an army with banners." The Meeting-house at Midholm, though large and located in a retired out-of-the-way place, was filled in every corner, numbers coming from a great distance, passing by Parish churches where the shepherds loved to slumber, and looked more after the fleece than the flock, in order that they might hear the pure gospel preached by one who was no hireling, and who bore his testimony against the yoke of Patronage and the errors of doctrine, the laxity of discipline, and other evils that prevailed in the "Auld Kirk."

The minds of these people who professed adherence to the Secession cause were well-informed, and generally they were able to give reasons for their separation from others; and they were influenced by their love to the truth, a regard for the peace and prosperity of Zion, and a desire to hand down unimpaired to posterity the true principles of the Reformed church of Scotland. On Sacramental occasions they had great Gatherings; great times of preaching, praying, and of stirring up one another to love and good works. Mr. Arnot would often have two or three ministers assisting him. Thursday was observed as a Fast-day, during which, two long, suitable sermons were preached; on Saturday there was preaching, when young communicants were received and addresses delivered to them in public; and then tokens were distributed to the congregation. On the Sabbath the action sermon was preached in the Meeting-house, and the tables served (which sometimes was done out of doors), while sermons were preached from a tent erected on *the green* throughout the day, one minister succeeding another; and often would the sun have set and the stars have made their appearance before they began to disperse. And then the whole



was concluded with the preaching on the Monday, which lasted until well on in the afternoon. Those were the days of genuine revivals, when one said to another,—“Come let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant which shall not be forgotten!”

But it was not long after Mr. Arnot's departure, till discord, division, and separation took place among them, principally occasioned by the unministerial conduct of those two who succeeded him, and partly by the number of families who emigrated to America, so that that formerly large congregation became reduced almost to a skeleton. For these forty years past, however, they have been under the charge of two able and diligent Pastors, and have been wonderfully increased and strengthened. It is worthy of notice, that Midholm is the only congregation now south of Edinburgh that stands connected with the Original Seceders who display the Banner of a Testimony in defense of principles witnessed for by the early fathers thereof; while all those large and numerous congregations north and south of the Tweed who were trained up under the ministry of such champions as Dalzel, Dr. Young, the two Morrisons, Hogg, Robertson and others, have swung from their original mooring, and floated down the stream of modern *improvements*, and are now found in communion with a church where hymn-singing, open-communion, and other practices, are judicially tolerated. “How are the mighty fallen!”

Among the many interesting anecdotes respecting Mr. Arnot which could be produced, I shall only give the following one. As long as he was able, he took great pleasure in attending public ordinances, and listening to the young men who were sent on by Presbytery to supply his pulpit. When he was pleased with the preacher and his preaching, after returning with his guest from church and when about to sit down to dinner, it was customary for him to say to his house-keeper,—“Bring in the siller (silver) spoons, Jannet:” but when he was not much taken with either the preacher or his performance, there was never a word said about “the siller spoons.”

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SERMONS.



## SERMON I.

### THE NATURE AND NECESSITY OF A TRUE RELIGIOUS REVIVAL.

“Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?”—PSALM LXXXV. 6.

It is generally supposed that this psalm was written after the Jews returned from Babylon. This was a remarkable external deliverance, and it is celebrated as such in the first three verses of the psalm. It was followed, however, by great deadness and formality in religion among the captives who had returned. The “dry bones” were collected, “bone to its bone, flesh had come up upon them, and they were covered with skin; but there was no *breath* in them.” This was matter of deep concern to the few who had the interest of Zion at heart, and deplored by them as a token of God’s displeasure. Hence the prayer in the fifth verse, “Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? Wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations?” This prayer seems directly opposed to the acknowledgment made in the third verse. But the reference may be to different periods. At the time of the edict of Cyrus, there had been favourable tokens of the removal of God’s displeasure from them, and that acknowledgment may refer to that period. But afterwards a stop was put by the edict of his successor to the building of the temple, and that was considered by the pious and discerning among them, as a new evidence of God’s displeasure; a drawing out of his anger beyond the period expected;

—"Wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations?" Or the description in the fourth and fifth verses may be viewed as having a respect more particularly to their spiritual condition. As we have already noticed, there was not any remarkable revival of religion among the Jews until Ezra's and Nehemiah's time. And, reader, remember, however prosperous a church may be as to numbers or wealth, if true practical godliness be in a low or declining state,—if "the love of many" for their own salvation, or for the salvation of the heathen either at home or abroad, "waxes cold,"—that church lies under the tokens of God's displeasure. It is for a spiritual revival that she here prays. This prayer supposes that the present state of the church was one of great deadness; and this only could be removed by God himself. Also that those among them who were "trembling for the ark of God" felt a struggle between hope and despair, as to her future revival; but still they were determined to bring the matter to God by prayer. In all our doubts and fears about the present or future state of the peace, the unity, or the safety of the church, let us come to a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God. The words under consideration are a suitable prayer for the Associate Church in her present circumstances; notwithstanding the movement which is taking place among the "dry bones" with a view to come together, it is a period of great deadness, I fear, in general, as to the life and power of godliness. We need a time of refreshing, and we should come to God for it, saying, "Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?" Reader, were this prayer answered, then we would see a union now taking place among the friends of the reformation, which would cause "Zion to put on her beautiful garments, look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." Put Him in remembrance of his promise respecting his own cause.

For the better understanding these words, and assisting you in your meditation, we propose,

I. To bring forward evidences of spiritual deadness in the church.



II. To illustrate the revival prayed for.

III. To notice the spirit of the prayer itself.

I. *Evidences of spiritual deadness in the church:*—

1. This deadness in the soul and in the church is characterized by a falling from first love and zeal.—As coldness is the symptom of natural death, so the want of spiritual fervour is an evidence of spiritual death. The morning of conversion is characterized by warmth of affection for a God in Christ, and zeal for his declarative glory and for the good of his people. Then the things of the spiritual world appear to the mind in a very striking and convincing light; besides, the soul is alive to the greatness of the deliverance, by the greatness of the change which has taken place—Hence we read of “The kindness of youth and the love of espousals.” But, alas! even in the case of God’s own people, this warmth of affection often greatly subsides. The cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches on the one hand, and the privations and temptations attendant on them on the other, often in a great degree quench that zeal which grace had kindled; so that they no longer feel that melting of heart, that warmth of affection, and that zeal for the Redeemer’s glory they once experienced—Thus, they are said to have “left their first love.” The same takes place in regard to churches: churches that are newly formed are usually remarkable for their zeal and love; but this seldom outlives the generation in which it commenced. The young generation which came out of Egypt were remarkable for their love to God and zeal for his honour; but this fervour of spirit continued only for one generation. “They served the Lord all the days of Joshua and of the elders that outlived him,” and after that, there arose another generation who knew not the Lord, nor what he had done for Israel. The captives who returned from Babylon had some zeal for God, but this had begun to fall away, and it was the observation of this growing deadness that caused the pious and discerning among them to present their prayers to God, which we are endeavouring to explain. We find also that even the primitive Christians did not long retain

their first zeal, love, and purity—Hence the charge brought against the church of Ephesus, Rev. ii. 4, 5;—“Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love: remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works,” &c. And we may add, the history of the churches of the Reformation, both in this and other countries, proves that they have greatly degenerated; and unless the Lord interpose in their behalf and send a time of refreshing from his presence, in a few years their spiritual death and consequent danger will be more evident. Let us say;—“Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?—Arise, O Lord, and plead the cause that is *thine own*.—In the midst of the years make known, and in wrath remember mercy.”

2. This deadness is characterized by the want of a relish for the pure word of God and scriptural ordinances.—When death is approaching, “desire fails.” It is not an easy matter to prepare or serve up food for a vitiated or decayed appetite. In like manner, when spiritual desire fails, the pure word of God dispensed in its native simplicity is no longer relished. All the powers of eloquence and the inventions of man’s wisdom must be brought in to collect and retain an audience. Nothing but smooth things which are easily swallowed and digested, will please and satisfy: *something new* is the cry! Among those who attend public ordinances, how few go to the house of God from a true desire to put honour upon his name; to have their souls edified, and to “hear what God the Lord will speak?” The greater part go either from habit, to see and be seen; or from novelty, to hear some new thing. Comparatively few “thirst for God, the living God, and long to appear before him, to see his power and his glory as he has been seen in the sanctuary.” Only one here and one there “as new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby.” We should pray for those times of revival to his church, “when incense and a pure offering shall be presented unto the Lord,” and when those who are “right-hearted” men shall follow after Him and say, “Come, let us

join ourselves unto the Lord in a perpetual covenant which shall not be forgotten."

3. Deadness in soul, and in the church, is known by spiritual insensibility.—"Gray hairs are here and there, and they know it not." The decline of nature is distinguished by the weakness of the senses, and when death does his work the senses are shut up. Spiritual declension is also characterized by spiritual insensibility. This seems to be a prevailing evil in our time, notwithstanding all that is doing for the cause of Christ, both at home and abroad. Even among those who retain the form of godliness, there is a great want of its power. The greater part sit under the dispensation of the law without being aroused to a sense of their sin and danger. They imagine "they shall have peace, though walking in the way of their own heart." Nor are they affected by the alluring sound of the gospel. They are "like the adder that stops her ear, and will not hear the voice of the charmer, though charming never so wisely." Among those who have been brought under serious impressions, how many soon lose them, like those who received seed among thorns; they hear the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. Insensibility usually attends a physical consumption; and it is notoriously the case with those who are under spiritual decline. "The fire burns them, and they know it not; the rod smites them, and they feel it not." This characterizes the present generation. What need have we to pray, "Turn us again, Lord God of hosts, cause the light of thy countenance to shine upon us, and we shall be safe!—Wilt thou not revive us again?—Give him no rest until he arise and make Zion a praise in the earth."

4. Unfruitfulness under the means of grace is another evidence of our deadness.—When the decline of nature comes on, it is marked by inactivity; and a spiritual decay is known by the want of activity for God. How few are either "zealous for the truth upon the earth," or labour to be "filled with the fruits of righteousness," or make it their study to "adorn the doctrine of God

their Saviour in all things?" A decay of nature "wastes the beauty" of man; and a spiritual decay wastes the beauty of the soul and the church. When "the rod of God's strength is sent out of Zion," and conversions take place in the church, her sons appear "in the beauty of holiness as the dew from the womb of the morning;" but when holiness decreases, religion must be greatly on the decline. That this is the case in our day is too evident from the want of charity and brotherly love, one for another, which ought to distinguish the followers of Christ; from the apostacies which take place, even by those who have been solemnly bound to abide by the cause of truth, and publicly declared that their tongue should cleave to the roof of their mouth, if ever they should forget or forsake the cause of Zion; as well as from the gross falls of some, and the utter indifference of others about the things which belong to their everlasting peace. Oh that He would "send help from above out of His sanctuary!" then shall His people "grow up as among the grass, and as willows by the water-courses: and our Zion be as a field which the Lord has blessed."

5. The great divisions in heart and profession among those who are the followers of Christ, is another mark of spiritual deadness.—Natural death divides the nearest relations. It separates not only the soul from the body, but also the different parts of the body from each other. In like manner has spiritual decay a dividing tendency. It divides the best of friends and the nearest relations, and causes them to look down upon each other with hatred, jealousy, and contempt, so that they fall out by the way and cannot speak peaceably one to another. Divisions have often been found necessary for the maintenance of the truth, and have thus been overruled by the Head of the church for good. Had it not been for separation from corrupt communions, we had all been sunk in Antichristian idolatry and superstition; and had it not been for separation from churches called reformed, the truth had not been retained among Protestants. But the necessity of separation supposes that the body from which we separate

is in a state of spiritual declension. In such a divided state of religious society as exists at present, all parties may in some respects be wrong, but all cannot be right; so that the very existence of divisions shows the need we have of spiritual revival, by whose benign influence the mist of prejudice may be scattered, the spirit of party removed, the partition walls of man's erecting by which brother was separated from brother may fall down, so that those who have long unnecessarily been kept from each other may join heart and hand, in the Redeemer's work. It must be confessed that it is a very difficult undertaking to heal the divisions of Zion, especially those which have been of long standing. It is not easy to erect a platform on which those may meet in friendship who were formerly in enmity; neither is every individual, however able he may think himself, competent to take the lead in forming such negotiations. He must be one who has a supreme regard to truth and the authority of God; he must not be a man of war from his youth, but a peacemaker; one who loves the truth and the peace; in possession of "the wisdom that is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated,"—throwing himself open to conviction and manifesting a disposition to give and receive explanations, as well as evidencing a becoming deference to the difficulties and scruples which his brethren may have upon certain points. Were such men as these taking an active hand in the work, we would, under the blessing of God, soon see the breaches of Zion healed. But this is not to be done by human might nor power, but by the Spirit of God. Let us pray then, reader, that "He would revive us again, and gather the outcasts of Israel into one," by causing "the watchmen that are upon Zion's walls to see eye to eye, to lift up the voice and sing together:" then shall we see the friends of Christ flying as doves to their windows, and as sheep before the gathering storm. "Hardhearted must he be who can look unmoved upon the wounds of the church, (said Dr. Mc Crie) or pass by, like the priest and Levite in the parable, without feeling disposed to provide, and pour in the healing oil and balm. It would be strange

and unnatural indeed, if any son of Zion should rejoice in her trouble, and take pleasure in beholding perpetual strife and violence in the city of God, instead of seeing it a peaceable habitation. If a true Christian is unavoidably placed in a scene of confusion, he will sigh and pray for deliverance from it; and if conscience and the duty which he owes to God require him to say or do what may prove the occasion of disturbance, or of alienating him from the affections of his brethren, he will sympathize deeply with the plaintive prophet, when he feelingly exclaims, ‘Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife, and a man of contention to the whole earth! I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury; yet every one of them doth curse me.’”

II. *The revival prayed for, illustrated:—*

1. This is God’s own work.—He only can begin a gracious work in the soul, and he only can revive it when brought low by the strength of remaining corruption, and the influence of temptation. And as it is God who gathers a people into a church state, and gives them ecclesiastical existence, so He only can revive his work and interest when it is low in the church. This is a work which cannot be accomplished by human wisdom, human policy, power, or riches; but by God’s Spirit. It belongs to him alone to select, qualify, and prosper those instruments and means that he will bless, and very often the most unlikely are made use of to show his wisdom and his power in “choosing the weak things to confound the strong, and the foolish to condemn the wise.” Let us then, reader, not look to the wisdom, love, zeal, or piety, of any creature upon earth for beginning a revival among the dry bones; for if we do, we may stand and look, and wonder and weep until the sun of our natural day set, without seeing any alteration taking place in the valley of vision; but rather let us pray in faith, and say, “Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live!”—“Arise, O Lord, thou and the ark of thy strength!—For meekness and for truth do Thou ride prosperously!”



2. As a means of preparing for this revival, God usually brings those who are to be the subjects of it into the furnace.—Conversion in the first instance is preceded by conviction, and that conviction is by the law, often accompanied with some heavy trial measured out in providence. Revival from declension is a new conversion, and must be preceded by a new awakening; and God usually in the case of individuals sanctifies some personal affliction, or domestic trial, for this purpose.—“Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep thy laws.” The same observations apply to the church. God has usually cast her into the furnace when about to revive his work in her. This was the case with his ancient people. The Babylonian captivity was made subservient to that revival which took place in the Jewish nation, to which the Psalmist refers in the beginning of the Psalm: and Zechariah, xiii. 8, 9; “And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cast off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God.”

The churches of Britain, and in many parts of the continent of Europe, have more than once been refined in the furnace of persecution. They have long enjoyed outward tranquillity, and the consequence is, they are settled on their lees, and have lost that love and zeal for God by which they were distinguished in former times. They have reason to fear the infliction of the threatening in Zephaniah i. 12: “And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees; that say in their heart, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil.” At any rate, it is believed by many that before a true revival take place in the churches of the Reformation, we are to have awful scenes of judgments throughout Europe. Much blood remains to be purged, and it will be purged by blood; the blood

of God's dear saints who have been slain for the testimony of Jesus, not only within, but without the city of the Antichristian state, Rev. xiv. 19, 20.—Then, reader, if “judgment must first begin at the house of God” what must be the end of them that obey not the gospel? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the wicked and the ungodly appear?” Let us sigh and cry for all the abominations done in the midst of us, and betake ourselves for safety to Him who has the writer's ink-horn by his side, and who can give commandment to the destroying angel not to come nigh to hurt us. We may say, “Alas! O Lord God, what shall be the end of these wonders?” It is evident that you and I, along with the present generation, shall have to obey the command ere ever these scenes take place: “Go thy way until the end be; for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.”

3. Such a revival in the soul of the believer and in the church in general, always takes place under the dispensation of God's word.—In regard to individuals, it is the means not only of their first conversion, but also of their spiritual restoration. “He sent his word and healed them.” This is also the means of revival of religion in churches and nations. The great revival of religion that took place when the captives returned from hanging their harps upon the willows, was under a dispensation of prophecy, Ezek. xxxvii. 7: “So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied there was a voice, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.”

That revival which took place on the introduction of Christianity, was under a pure dispensation of the gospel. It was by the preaching of the doctrines of the cross in scriptural purity and simplicity, accompanied by the power of God, that the pillars of Antichristian darkness and despotism were shaken at the time of the glorious Reformation:—and that revival which is to usher in the latter-day glory, “when all shall know the Lord from the least even to the greatest,” is to be accomplished by the same means. Then, let us never esteem the preaching of the gospel fool-

ishness, or dare to substitute any thing in its place, however pleasing or popular; but let us look upon it as the wisdom of God, and the power of God, for the salvation of guilty sinners. Let us use every means to preserve it in its purity in our own land, and embrace every opportunity to send it to those lands that are full of the habitations of cruelty, and remain in the region and shadow of death. This alone can open the deaf ear to hear, cause the blind to see, and make the hard heart to feel and understand. Oh! that the time would come when "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea!" then "shall the desert and solitary places be glad, and bud and blossom as the rose." Let us say, "Until the day break and the shadows flee away, make haste, our beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether" (separation).

4. The revival here prayed for is only effected by the Word, when accompanied by the Spirit—"It is the Spirit that quickeneth." He revives by his natural influences the face of the earth, after the vegetable creation has suffered a partial death. "He sends forth his Spirit, and they are created; he reneweth the face of the earth." And it is by his gracious influences that religion is revived in the soul and in the church. So long as Ezekiel prophesied only to the bones, they were not quickened. Bone indeed came to its bone, flesh came upon them, and they were covered with skin, but there was no breath in them. It was not till he prophesied unto the winds, that breath entered into them, and they lived and stood up a great army. It was not simply the preaching of the word, but the preaching of it accompanied with the demonstration of the Spirit and with power, which produced the revival under the ministry of the apostles. What the dew and rain are to the natural world, the Spirit is to the moral and the spiritual world. The outpouring of the Spirit is a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; this alone can heal the wounds which the church has received in the house of her friends, and restore the years which the caterpillar and the canker-worm have eaten; and

likewise cause the envy of Ephraim to depart, and the adversaries of Judah to be cut off. May the Lord hasten the happy time in which "nothing shall be found to hurt or destroy in all his holy mountain; when her peace shall be as a river, and her righteousness as the waves of the sea!"

5. Such revivals are the fruit of prayer.—It is true that God has promised to revive his own work, and to fill the house with his glory, when the time arrives which he has set to favour her; and we may rest satisfied that not one word shall fail of all that He has spoken: yet he has said, "For these things I will be inquired of by the house of Israel, that I may do it for them." Accordingly, when about to revive his work, he pours out the Spirit of grace and supplication upon the remnant which are left, and in answer to their prayers he sends a plentiful rain, whereby his heritage is refreshed when weary. Thus, when Daniel and the other captives understood that the time of their captivity was drawing to a close, they set themselves to address God in earnest prayer and supplication; Daniel, ix. 17, 18, 19: "Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary, that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our own righteousness, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people which are called by thy name." Such prayers as these, presented by "the faithful and peaceable in Israel," cannot fail to enter into the ears of the God of Sabaoth, and bring down blessings upon themselves, and the church with which they are connected. In the days of Malachi, when the great body of the people had "dealt treacherously" with God, and "robbed" him "in tithes and offerings," there were a few "that feared the Lord and spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard, and a book of remembrance was

written before him for them that feared the Lord, and thought upon his name." Their meditation about and their fears concerning the dark and threatening cloud which then hung over the church, were followed, in answer to their prayers, by a blessed promise of *light*, *healing*, and *protection*: "But unto you that fear my name, shall the Son of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves in the stall." The outpouring of the Spirit at the day of Pentecost, took place at a prayer-meeting. But time would fail to mention how Peter was awoke, by a powerful and affectionate angel, when he was sound asleep between two soldiers bound with two chains; how the angel of the Lord caused a light to shine into the prison, raised him up, caused the chains to fall off his hands, the iron gates to open wide, and afforded him a passage into the street. All this was done because we are told, "Prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him." The deliverance of Paul and Silas was another instance of the efficacy of prayer.

How much reason have we to lament the want of the spirit of prayer and supplication among professors in our day! All seem to mind their own things, and not the things of Jesus Christ. Where we have any doubt about the security, or justice of the lease, or title of our farms, how readily can we meet and converse one with another in any season of the year or in any hour of the day, how we may obtain "equal rights,"—but when we are called to speak one with another about our title to the heavenly inheritance, or make our calling and election sure, we feel no inclination to attend; we wish to be excused. May the Lord "pour out upon us the Spirit of grace and supplication, that we may look upon him whom we have pierced, and mourn," &c.

### III. *The spirit of the prayer itself:—*

1. It supposes a deep sense of the provocations which might dispose God to cast them off for ever.—The revivals formerly granted had been misimproved, for which the Lord was displeased, and hid his face from them. Sins committed after God has interposed in a

remarkable manner for individuals or for churches, are heinous sins, because committed against great light, love, and long-suffering; and therefore it is no wonder that those who are guilty of them dread final expulsion from God, or of being "given up to their own hearts' lusts, and to walk in their own counsels."

2. The prayer implies a faint ray of hope, arising from what the Lord had done.—Though their departures from former attainments, after the Lord's kindness towards them, might inspire fear and dread when they considered their desert; yet the mercy and power displayed in God's former gracious dealings with them left room for hope. These were acts of sovereign mercy, and the mercy of God was still the same. They were the effects of divine power, and they knew that "God's arm was not shortened that it could not save; neither was his ear heavy, that it could not hear."

3. The prayer is also founded upon divine faithfulness, and is to be viewed as a prayer of faith.—God has promised to "bring his people again from Bashan hill"—to "put forth his hand the second time to recover the remnant of his people which shall be left from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Shinar, and from the isles of the sea," Isa. xi. 11. Now, this and similar promises laid a foundation for the plea of faith,—“Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?”

4. This also intimates that the church only expected the revival prayed for, as an act of divine sovereignty.—Hence we find the petition turns upon the will of God. Neither they nor their fathers had any merit to plead before him, on account of which they were entitled to his grace and mercy; for they knew they were unprofitable and unworthy servants, and if He were to "mark their iniquities, they could not stand nor answer for one of a thousand." God "will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy."

5. In conclusion we will say, let not those who are the true friends of Zion be discouraged.—Do not "despise the day of small things," and give way to despondency, as if greater and better days were never to arrive;



but rather double your diligence, and “strengthen that which remains, and may be ready to die.” If the church is in a low state as to the life and power of religion, and her love for the truth and the peace; if you are a man of prayer, “plead with your mother, plead;” cry also unto Him who is her counsellor, her refuge and her strength, that he would come and shine upon his sanctuary for the Lord’s sake, and “make her a praise in the earth.” Lift up your eyes, and behold the height of her towers, examine narrowly the number and beauty of her palaces, go round about and mark her bulwarks, that ye may tell posterity that “this God,” who has planned her, defended her, and dwells in the midst of her, “is our God and our guide even unto death.”—The Lord is known in her palaces for a refuge; the Lord will help her, and that right early.—This is the hill where God desireth to dwell in, yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever.”

## SERMON II.

CHRIST DWELLING IN THE HEARTS OF HIS PEOPLE.

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.”—EPH. III. 17.

The Apostle informs the Ephesians that he had bowed his knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, “that he would grant unto them according to the riches of his grace to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.” This was the end which he had in view; and the words we are to consider, refer to the means by which this end was to be accomplished. It was by “Christ dwelling in their hearts by faith, and their being rooted and grounded in love.” Faith is an assent to testimony. The faith here mentioned is an assent to the testimony of God in his word: “If we receive the witness of man, the witness of God is greater.” For the better understanding of the mind of the Spirit contained in these words, we shall make a few explanatory remarks to illustrate the position that—Christ dwells in the hearts of believers by faith.

1. *It is not his essential presence to which these words refer.*—Christ, in regard to his essential presence, is every where. He could say when on earth that he was also in heaven: “No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he who came down from heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven.” In this respect he is present in heaven, in earth, and in hell: “Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: If I make my bed in hell, thou art there.” He is present in this respect in the hearts of the wicked, as well as in the hearts of the righteous—“Hell and destruction are naked before him; how much more the hearts of

the children of men?" But he is in a special and peculiar manner in believers.

2. *It is not with respect to Christ's bodily presence that he dwells in the hearts of his people.*—Christ, as to his human nature and the more glorious manifestations of his divinity, is in heaven: "And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you; whom the heavens must receive (retain) until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken of by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Acts iii. 20, 21. In this sense Christ cannot be said to dwell on earth, or in the hearts of his people. No: his human nature, though united to his divine person, is finite, and consequently must be limited to one place. Considered with regard to his human nature, few that have believed in him as the Son of God have ever seen him. This was the privilege only of a few who lived during his personal ministry on earth, and perhaps of two after his ascension into heaven—"Whom, having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.—Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord." The immediate vision of Christ for the present is not a thing enjoyed, but only expected, by the saints on earth. They look, they pray, they wait for God's blessed Son from heaven, to raise up their mortal bodies and fashion them like unto his glorious body.

3. *Christ, as respects his gracious manifestations, is present in his church by means of his word and ordinances.*—In this respect we need not say, "Who shall ascend to heaven, to bring him down? or who shall descend into the deep, to bring him up?" Every person who has the word preached to him has Christ brought near to him in the Word; Rom. x. 6—8. In the gospel he is revealed in all his offices, grace, and fulness. He is not only revealed, but he is also offered, to the chief of sinners for their acceptance. He is so in his righteousness—"Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness: I bring near my right-

eousness, it shall not be far off; and my salvation shall not tarry." He is offered in his benefits, and these are summed up in eternal life, which is exhibited to every gospel hearer as the gift of God—"This is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." It is in the Word that faith apprehends its object, and improves it for all the purposes of salvation. Multitudes, nevertheless, who have Christ exhibited to them in the Word, continue strangers to all saving interest in him, and fellowship with him. He is brought near to them, and yet they continue strangers to him. Within reach of the great Physician, they perish under the disease of sin. In sight of heaven, they sink down to hell.

4. *Christ, as respects spiritual inhabitation, dwells in his people by his Spirit.*—The Spirit takes up his abode in the hearts of his people in the day of effectual calling as "the Spirit of Christ;" as his intercessor within them. "Ye are not of the flesh, but of the Spirit if so be that the Spirit of Christ dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." It is he who infuses a gracious principle of spiritual life into the effectually called, without which there is no deliverance from a state of sin and death. The very act itself of *willing* in their conversion, is of the Spirit's operation, and although they *will*, yet it is he who causes them to will, by "working in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Christ dwells in his people constantly by his Spirit, who is given to them to abide with them for ever—"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." John xiv. 16, 17. He is also in them as the source of spiritual life and happiness—"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, it shall be in him a well of living water springing up into everlasting life." John iv. 14.

5. *Christ, in respect of spiritual realization, dwells in the hearts of his people.*—As in nature, objects cannot

be realized in the mind, though applied to the body, unless apprehended by it through its sensible organs: so spiritual objects, as exhibited in the Word, cannot be realized in the mind but by faith. Our faith or unbelief cannot affect the existence of these objects in the abstract, but they only exist with respect to us in so far as they are believed by us. This applies in a certain sense to the object of testimony in general. Many things have existence in this world, which we never saw, but of whose existence we are as certain on the ground of testimony, as we are of the existence of those objects which fall immediately under the observation of our senses; yet our knowledge of these arises not merely from the testimony itself, but from the credit we give to it. In like manner the objects of the divine testimony have only an existence or reality in our own minds according as it is believed by us. If we reject the testimony as false, we consider what is exhibited in it as false also.—Hence, faith is said to be the evidence of things not seen. It realizes those things as certain in the mind, which to the unbeliever, have no existence, no reality—"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." The deluge was foretold to multitudes in the old world, as well as to Noah; but to them it was not a certain event until it became matter of sad experience, because the divine warning was not credited by them. To Noah it was a certain event, and an event, though future, which engaged the whole of his attention in making preparation for its coming: and it was so in virtue of his faith, Heb. xi. 7. But faith does not only take up the certainty of absent objects and future events, it also realizes the benefit resulting from these. Hence it is said to be the substance of things not seen. It is by faith that the believer enters upon the begun participation of all the grace of God's promises, as a foretaste and earnest of the full enjoyment of it in a future world. Christ, as we have already seen, is in the Word. It is there faith finds him and fixes upon him, and conducts him into the heart.

6. *Christ dwells in the hearts of his children by faith,*

*in the glory of his person as the Son of God.*—It is by faith this glory is contemplated in the understanding, and realized in the heart of the Christian. During our Lord's abode upon earth multitudes saw him in the flesh, and were astonished at his miracles, as well as the disciples; but it was only those whose eyes were opened by his Spirit dwelling in them that recognised his supreme deity. The reason was, they only had this divine faith—"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." This view of Christ was not attained by bodily vision, but by that faith which is the operation of God. Flesh and blood did not reveal it unto them, but their Father who is in heaven. It is owing to the want of faith that some consider Christ as only a super-angelic spirit, others as only a mere man, and it is for the same reason some look upon him as an impostor. The true believer has an assurance in his heart, that he is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

7. *Christ dwells in the hearts of his children by faith, in the benefits of his righteousness as a priest.*—This righteousness is unto all in the free offer of the gospel, without any exception. But none realize the saving benefit of this righteousness unless they who are in possession of true and saving faith. Faith realizes this righteousness as the ground of pardon and peace with God. It can have no influence in purifying or pacifying the conscience until it is believed in and applied. Though a prince grant a pardon to a criminal who is under the fearful apprehensions of a violent death, it cannot afford relief to his troubled soul, unless he hear of it. Though it be reported to him, his distress continues unless he believes the report and accepts of the free pardon as intended for, and suitable to him in particular. If he considers the report as false, instead of diminishing, it increases his sorrows. So in like manner in the case before us. God is, in the gospel report, declared to be a God of pardon, of peace, and of love; and it is revealed that Christ has made peace through the blood of his cross; yet until believed and applied, these truths



vill neither awaken, nor purify, nor pacify the conscience. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Without this faith, the blood of Christ can have no influence in purifying the heart from an evil conscience. A guilty conscience must always be an evil conscience; for guilt remaining there, produces hatred of God and of Christ; but his peace-making blood, improved by faith, produces love. "We love him because he first loved us." And love to Christ purifies the conscience. It makes our duty our delight. "The love of Christ constraineth us."

8. *It is by faith Christ dwells in the heart, in respect of the efficacy of his doctrine.*—The doctrine of Christ as the prophet of the church has an enlivening, sanctifying, and comforting influence. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."—"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."—"This word of thine is my comfort in mine affliction." But it has these influences only as believed by us. Unless it be mixed with faith, it will do us no good—Heb. iv. 1, 2. The splendour of the meridian sun is lost upon the blind man. Surrounded with light, he is in darkness. In like manner the unbeliever is in spiritual darkness, though living under the clearest light of the gospel; "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not." It is owing to the want of faith that the precious gospel, which is to believers the savour of life unto life, is to unbelievers the savour of death unto death; 2 Cor. ii. 16. Unbelief converts the gospel, which is the ministry of righteousness for our justification, into the occasion of our greater condemnation; "This is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men have loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil."

9. *It is by faith that Christ dwells in the heart, in respect of his influences as a king or law-giver.* Believers are not without law to God, but are under law to Christ. But the law as a rule of righteousness in the hand of Christ, is purely of supernatural revelation, and apprehended by faith. This is Christ's easy yoke, which

none but believers do, or can, put on. "Take my yoke upon you, for it is easy, and my burden, for it is light, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls." Motives to obedience are such as are purely of faith;—such as the love of God in sending his Son into our world—the love of Christ in giving himself a ransom for many. "We love him, because he first loved us."—"Ye are not your own, but bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your bodies and spirits, which are his." Faith is the true spring of all evangelical and acceptable obedience—"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts." Heb. xi. 4.

10. *Our Lord Jesus Christ dwells in the hearts of his people by faith, as an object of desire, delight, and esteem.* He is only precious to them that believe—"Unto you therefore who believe he is precious." To the believer he is "the chief among ten thousands, and altogether lovely;" but unto them that believe not, he is "as a root sprung out of dry ground, having no form nor comeliness." Faith alone discerns his superior excellence, and causes us to desire him and make him our own; for until we discern his excellence and suitableness, and accept him, we will never love or esteem him. Having tasted that he is gracious, we will seek fellowship and communion with him as the one thing needful. This we will desire above all other things. What things we had been accustomed to "count gain, we now count loss for Christ, that we may win him and be found in him."

11, and Lastly. *Christ Jesus dwells in the hearts of his own children by faith, as the hope of glory.* That residence which Christ now has in the heart is an earnest and pledge of glory. Hence he is said to be in the believer the hope of glory—"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

## SERMON III.

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST THE ETERNAL AND IMMUTABLE GOD.

“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”—  
HEBREWS XIII. 8.

Every creature that has been brought into existence, either in heaven or on earth, is liable to change. A number of the angelic host who were created pure spirits “kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, and are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day;” and, if the rest retained their holiness and happiness, it was not owing to any stability in themselves, but the sustaining and confirming grace of God. The human race have also given lamentable proof of instability, in their “departure from the Fountain of living waters, and hewing out broken and empty cisterns which can hold no water.”—“God made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions.” If we consider the outward lot of man, it is constantly changing; and whatever is stable in the condition of those who are in a state of grace, arises not from the nature of the creature, but from the grace of God. When we are, therefore, told that “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,” he is more than an angel, a super-angelic spirit, or a man. The character here given of Christ may be considered in itself, and in its connexion with the preceding and subsequent context. In itself it is very comprehensive. In his person, he is the Son of God, Jesus the divine Saviour. In his office, he is Christ, the called of God, and consecrated to his work by the unction of the Spirit without measure. In his

person and offices, he is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," words which indicate, in the plainest manner, that he is eternal. The design of the inspired writer, in this statement, is evident from the preceding context. He was exhorting the believing Hebrews to attend to the happy results of the conversation of those who had been their spiritual guides. They had trusted in Christ, and they were not put to confusion. But he is the same now as in their time—as worthy of the faith and hope of the present, as he had been of the past generations.

1. *Jesus Christ is the same in his divine person, in every period of duration.*—His divine person is from everlasting to everlasting the same, without any variableness or the least shadow of turning. God is necessarily self-existent and independent of any other; and such is Christ Jesus our Lord; he is God of himself. As man and mediator, he has a life given him for himself and those for whom he was to lay it down and take it again, by the Father; but as God, he owes his life and being to none; "he is over all God, blessed for ever." Thus the Eternal Now, could not only have said to his enemies, "Before Abraham was I am," but also before Adam was, or the earth, or the heavens, or the angels were, "I AM that I AM." This view of his divine person was early known to the church: hence we find her saying, "For unto us a Child is born: unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." This same incomprehensible and glorious object of our worship, whom Isaiah saw sitting on his throne high and lifted up, says, "Hearken to me, O Jacob and Israel, my called, I am He; I am the first, I also am the last. Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens." Thus we find the attribute of unchangeableness every where ascribed to him as well as to the Father. Nor is it ascribed to him by mere creatures, but by the Father himself, who will not give his glory to another nor his praise to graven images—

“To the Son he saith, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish, but thou remainest; they shall all wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture thou shalt fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.” His incarnation made no real change upon his person. The change was only relative. In consequence of his incarnation, or his being made flesh and tabernacling among us, he had a nature united to his person which was not connected with it before; but he did not cease in any respects to be what he was before. In his divine person he was in respect of every essential property “the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”

2. *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, in his official character as Mediator.*—All that is manifested respecting him as Mediator in time, he was in the divine person of God from everlasting. Hence we find him speaking of his official character as Mediator—“The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.” He who was manifested in his official capacity in the fulness of time, was fore-ordained from everlasting—“Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifested in these last times for you.” Though Christ as our Mediator existed in the purpose or decree from everlasting, and was thus set up, yet his human nature did not actually exist from eternity, as this was not then necessary to his becoming our Days-man, for it was enough when he in the councils of peace agreed to become responsible to divine justice for all the debt his people contracted—for all the dishonour done by them to the divine law, that in time he should become man and make his soul an offering for sin:—even then, he assumed the name of God-man and Mediator, and acted as such. Thus we find him acting as the one Mediator between God and man under the former dispensation before the fulness of time came, when he was to be made of a woman,

made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. He acted as a *Prophet*, by revealing to Adam immediately after the fall the covenant of grace; in preaching by his Spirit in the time of Noah, to those whose spirits were in the prison of hell in the days of the Apostle Peter; and by his Spirit in the prophets testifying before-hand of his own sufferings, and of his own glory, which was to follow. He who taught the church under the former dispensation by the ministry of the prophets, is the same who in the fulness of time discharged his prophetic work in our world and in our nature; and he who went about preaching the gospel for more than three years in Galilee and Judea, is the same who now speaks to us from heaven; Heb. xii. 25. He who is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the church militant, is also the sun of the heavenly world—The heavenly world “has no need of the sun, neither of the moon, for the Lord God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.”—He is the same in his *priesthood*. The priests under the law “were not suffered to continue by reason of death; but this man continues for ever, because he has an unchangeable priesthood.” Even the order of the priesthood of Aaron was subject to change, but Christ is a priest of a superior order, distinguished by its immutability—“For those priests were made without an oath, but this with an oath by Him that said to him, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.”—He is also the same in his *kingly* office. He was a king in the purpose of God from everlasting, and he entered upon the exercise of his kingly as well as his priestly and prophetic offices immediately after the fall of man. Thus, before he came in the flesh, he as a king gathered, governed, and protected his people, and they confessed him to be their Lord, their Lawgiver and Judge, and as a Priest in the faith of whose atoning blood all his people died, for he was “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” When he came into our world as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, yet he was “born king of the Jews,” and was even then the alone king and head of his church.



And now since he has left our world, he is still the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever—"Him hath God with his right hand exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour for to give repentance and forgiveness of sin." Whatever changes may take place in the manner of his administration, his official honours will be permanent—"He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

3. *He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, in his saving benefits.*—His blood is of the same efficacy for the remission of sins from age to age. He who was set forth in the promises and types as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, is the same who in time by himself purged our sins on Calvary. And he who bore our sins in his own body on the tree, is the same whom God sets forth in a gospel dispensation a propitiation through faith in his blood, declaring his righteousness for the remission of sins. He is the same in his righteousness for our justification; for "his righteousness is an everlasting righteousness." The efficacy of his intercession is the same; for "him the Father heareth always—He is able to save to the very uttermost all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." His Spirit is the same for the illumination, sanctification, and consolation of the church. He is given to all that believe, that he may remain with them for ever. And though at times his influences are in a great measure restrained from the church, yet He is never altogether taken from her. This is God's covenant with her—"My Spirit which I have put within thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, I will not take out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor of thy seed's seed for ever." The inheritance which he procured for his people in heaven is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; is conveyed through the same channel; and secured by the same means.

4. *He is the same, in his love to his people, yesterday, to-day, and for ever.*—His love towards his people was from everlasting. Hence we find him saying—"Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore

with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Having loved his own who were in the world, he loves them unto the end. Their exercises in his service may change; their love for him may become weak; but his love for them is still the same. His dispensations may change as to their outward aspect, but however dark and lowering the sky may appear, there is always a bright smiling face behind; and when the clouds clear away, it is seen and loved more than ever. A vein of love runs through all his dealings with his people—"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulations, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." He "rests in his love." The same love which constrained him to assume their nature and die for them, makes him espouse their persons; and the same love which brings them into a state of grace here, will not leave them until they are brought to a state of glory hereafter—"Father, I will, that they also whom thou hast given me be with me, where I am, to behold my glory."

5. *He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, in his wisdom to instruct, and his power to save his people.*—"His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor." In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. These treasures are inexhaustible. As the light of the natural sun is not diminished by all his communications from age to age, so neither are our Lord's treasures of wisdom or knowledge diminished, notwithstanding the thousands and tens of thousands who have been supplied by him in every period of the church. "All their well-springs are in Him; and out of his fulness have they all received grace upon grace." Besides, his power to save from sin, Satan, and the world, is of equal extent with his wisdom—"His hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear. He is the Lord, mighty to save, able to save to the very uttermost" of his people's desires or necessities.

6. *He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, in*

*his truth and faithfulness.*—"Truth is the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. He keepeth truth for ever." Heaven and earth may pass away, but his word shall not pass away till all his promises be fulfilled to his people, and all his threatenings be inflicted upon his enemies. He is as faithful to the one as he is to the other—"God is not a man that he should lie; neither the son of man that he should repent: hath he said it, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" He is "the faithful and true Witness, the Prince of the kings of the earth—These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth, and no man openeth."

Are these remarks calculated to prove that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever? Then we should improve this doctrine,—

1. *For promoting our steadfastness in the faith of the gospel.*—As Christ is the same, so the doctrines of the gospel, if faithfully and scripturally preached, must be the same in every age. We should, therefore, "cease to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge," and be on our guard to keep ourselves out of the way of those Arian, Socinian, and Arminian words of doctrine, under the influence of which so many are carried away from the good old paths, tossed to and fro until they are dashed to pieces, and make shipwreck of the faith and a good conscience. As we have received and heard of Christ's divinity, his official character as Mediator, his saving benefits, his love, his wisdom, his power, faithfulness, and truth, we should "hold fast that profession of our faith, without wavering; for faithful is He whom we serve, to do all he has promised." We should "be steadfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord—In due time we shall reap, if we faint not."

2. *Is Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever?—then how great the encouragement to the chief of sinners to come to him for peace, pardon, and acceptance.*—

We find that the worst characters our world ever produced have found pardon and acceptance through the blood of Christ; and we have the testimony of Him who cannot lie, that this remedy has the same virtue to cleanse the conscience, enlighten the understanding, regulate the affections, and renew the will, as in former times. Christ is the same, and so are all his saving benefits. He still says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." And multitudes who could not inherit the kingdom, because they were fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, thieves, covetous, drunkards, extortioners, have found, to their happy experience, that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's own Son, cleanses from all sin; and can say—Such were we once, but we are washed, but we are sanctified, but we are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. None that are out of the place of eternal punishment need despair.

3. *Is Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever? then his people need never be afraid either of the malice, power, or number of enemies, whether they be temporal or spiritual.*—His people have in all ages been conquerors and more than conquerors through Him, and will continue to be so to the end of time. The church can never sink so long as Christ is on board. He who redeemed her from Egypt, and from Babylon, and who kept her alive in the furnace of persecution under pagan and anti-christian Rome, is as willing and as able to save her as ever he was. He is still as a wall of fire around her, and the glory in the midst of her, and no weapon that is formed against her shall prosper—"Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing? He that sits in heaven shall laugh; the Lord shall hold them in derision. Then shall he speak to them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure."

4. *Is Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever towards his church?—then how ought we to be filled with shame and confusion on account of our weakness and want of love to him, and zeal for his honour and glory in the world?*—Though he will never turn away from us to

do us good, yet we too frequently and easily turn our back upon him and his cause, and follow those who mind their own things and not the things that are Jesus Christ's. We should "love him who first loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice unto God for a sweet-smelling savour." Happy will it be for us if we could say in truth—"But we are not of them that draw back to perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."

## SERMON IV.

JESUS CHRIST THE COMPLEMENT OF THE CHURCH  
OR BELIEVERS.

“Ye are complete in Him.”—COLOSSIANS, II. 10.

The church, considered in herself, is a weak, afflicted, defenceless society. In respect to numbers, she has been, in general, the fewest of all people. With respect to outward circumstances, she has been composed of a poor and an afflicted people. With respect to talents and human acquirements, “not many wise men after the flesh” have joined her fellowship; but God “has chosen the weak things of this world to confound the things that are mighty, and the foolish things to confound the wise, and things that are not, to bring to nought the things are.” But viewed in connexion with her Head, she is the most noble, most safe, and most happy society that ever has existed, or ever will exist on this side the grave. She “is complete in Him who is the Head of all principalities and powers.” And, in the preceding verse, to convince us of this, the apostle says, “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” *The Godhead* is a scriptural expression for the divine nature. And we are here told that in Christ Jesus all the fulness of this nature dwells. In his person as the Son of God, there is not an essential attribute of Godhead which does not belong to him. This fulness is in him bodily, that is, wholly. Or, the expression may refer to his human nature; then it dwells in him really, and not figuratively, as the Shekinah in the tabernacle or temple, which was only a symbol of Divinity, a shadow of His gracious presence; but in Christ the fulness of Deity dwells *substantially*,



and all the divine perfections are exercised by him, as "God manifested in the flesh," through the union of the divine and human natures in one person. This fulness, as it is said to dwell in his person absolutely, dwells in it necessarily. In this respect it differs from his mediatorial fulness, of which the same apostle speaks—"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." It is in this relative fulness that his church is complete, or, as the word may be rendered, *made full* in him; and it is out of this fulness that all his people receive grace upon grace. Thus the church is filled up, rendered perfect, or complete, in Him. Whatever is necessary for her purity, peace, happiness and safety, either in their beginning or consummation, is found treasured up in him—"He is made of God unto her, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."

1. *All who believe in Christ for the salvation of their souls, are complete in him as a head of reconciliation.*—When God created man upright, and appointed him to be the federal head and representative of all his posterity, they were complete in him as long as he retained his integrity; not as a head of reconciliation, for no offense had been given, no separation had taken place, no sin had entered in his heart, his word, or his deed: but when sin entered into our world, and death came by this sin which violated the covenant, then it separated us from God, exposed us to his wrath and curse, and caused him to hide his face from us—"Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." Hence we are told that "God is angry with the wicked every day." His judicial displeasure at sin, on which he cannot look but with abhorrence and detestation, can only be turned away by the removal of that which was the cause of it. But God's righteous displeasure can only be turned away, and guilt removed, by satisfaction or punishment adequate to the offense. And what is this? "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life." And "without shedding of blood there is no remission." But sin, which

has obliterated the image of God from the soul of man, and caused God to turn from him as a loathsome creature, could not be expiated or atoned for by the blood of any created being. To satisfy the justice of the lawgiver and vindicate the honour of his law, the punishment must be adequate to the offense. Now we must ever keep in mind, that sin is an offense of infinite demerit, having been committed against a God of infinite dignity and purity. It is for this reason that legal sacrifices "could not take away sin as pertaining to the conscience." God could not be pleased with rams, or calves of a year old. Sacrifice and offering he would not accept. He would not accept of a first-born for the sin of the soul. But in the choice and mission of his only begotten Son, he has provided, in his rich mercy, a ransom fully adequate to all the demands of his dishonoured, violated law. By his death and resurrection God is reconciled to sinners; that is, his judicial displeasure is turned away. Reconciliation was accomplished by the death of Christ as a sacrifice for the sins of those that were given him in the counsels of peace from eternity; and this sacrifice was offered to God as an offended judge, who must be the party reconciled by it—"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness." Hence we are told that those who "believe" in this atonement, and take shelter under this "everlasting righteousness," are taken into a new covenant relation with God, who was formerly angry with them—"I will establish my covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: that thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God." It is a knowledge of this reconciliation and of this relation, that causes every believing soul to exclaim, "We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom now we have received the atonement." This reconciliation comes to be mutual—"I will say

to them that were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God." As the sacrifice of Christ satisfies the justice of God; so faith in the atonement pacifies the conscience of the sinner, and subdues his enmity against God—"We love him because he first loved us." In Christ, as the head of "reconciliation," God and sinners meet in peace, for He "is in Christ reconciling sinners to himself, not imputing to them their trespasses." Therefore they are found saying, "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." A blessed relation this! "A blessed people they are whose God is the Lord!"—This reconciliation between God and the sinner, is necessarily followed with peace between the sinner and holy angels. These blessed spirits must be hostile to all who are enemies to God, their Creator and Preserver; but when sinners are united to Him by the bond of friendship, holy angels also become their friends—"There is joy in heaven among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.—Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who are heirs of salvation?" The whole family of elect angels and redeemed men, are gathered together in Him as their head of government, and are complete in him in all their relations, attainments, and services.

2. *Those who believe in Christ, in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, are complete in him as a head of justifying righteousness.*—This is nearly connected with our former particular. Our Lord, in making reconciliation for sin, laid a solid foundation for the justification of all his people. His death for sin, taken in connexion with his holy obedience to the precepts of God's law, constitutes that righteousness, on the ground of which we are justified, and in him we are complete. We are, in ourselves considered, destitute of any righteousness—"All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away." Instead of covering us, they only expose us; instead of beautifying us, they only defile us. But in Christ we are complete. His righteousness when imputed to us, is sufficient for the remission of our sins

and the justification of our persons; however vile and worthless we may be in ourselves. In Him, as a head of righteousness, we enjoy a complete pardon—"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.—There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." We are also completely accepted. Our persons and services are accepted through him. We are received into favour, and are never more cast off—"For this is as the waters of Noah unto me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."

3. *All who receive and rest upon Christ for salvation, are complete in him as the Head of all saving gifts and influences.*—In him they have ample provision for their external defense and internal illumination and purification—"When he ascended up on high, he received gifts for men, even the rebellious, that God the Lord might dwell among them." He ascended on high "that he might fill all things"—that he might fill his church with office bearers, his ministers with gifts and graces, and his ordinances with efficacy for the conversion of sinners, and for building up saints in their most holy faith: Eph. iv. 10—12. Ministers without Christ are insufficient for any service—"Not as though we were sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of Christ, who has also made us able ministers of the New Testament." Independent of him, the ordinances of religion are "wells without water." His Spirit "fills the pools" with the water of life; which vivifies, sanctifies, and comforts his church.—More particularly, they are complete in him as a head of *illuminating* influences. He is the ever shining, never changing Sun of the church, from which she derives all her light respecting spiritual and eternal things. He is "the Sun of righteousness, who arises upon them

with healing in his wings"—Mal. iv. 3. "The true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world"—John i. 9. His people are, at best, while here, but limited in their acquaintance with the things of God. Here they know but in part; but there is an all-sufficiency in Christ, hid in him, treasured up in him, for them—"In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." This light he communicates according to their necessities. He is kind and compassionate, and instructs them according as they are able to bear it. As the natural light breaks in upon our world gradually, so as not to injure the organs of vision by a sudden transition from darkness to light, so in like manner the Sun of righteousness diffuses his light gradually upon the soul, so as not to confuse, injure, or overwhelm the mind—"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." He "leads the blind in a way they know not, and in paths they have not known; he makes darkness light before them, and crooked things straight; these things he has promised to do unto them, and will not forsake them." That day which now dawns upon their souls, will shine in heaven in all its meridian splendour. There "they have no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God enlightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."—They are also complete in him as a Head of *sanctifying* influences. He is made of God unto them sanctification. He is the perfect pattern of their new life. He is also the official cause of it. He sanctifies the church by his word and his Spirit—"Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish." The Spirit was poured out upon him without measure, not merely to qualify his human nature with all necessary gifts and graces, but that he should purify his people, and make them meet for the heavenly inheritance. They are saved with the washing of water, and the renewing

of the Holy Ghost, which is shed on them abundantly through Jesus Christ their Saviour.—They are, besides these things, complete, or made full, in him as a Head of *comforting* influences. He is a kind friend and comforter to his people under all changes, trials, and bereavements. He was anointed for this very purpose—“The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.” And when he left our world as to his bodily presence, never to return till he “come in the clouds with power and great glory,” he sent them another Comforter and Advocate, who would never leave nor forsake them—“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” Indeed, all new covenant blessings are treasured up in Him, as the Head of the church; and “out of His fulness all his people are daily receiving grace for grace,” in proportion to their day of duty.

4. *They that believe in Christ are all complete in him as a Head of government.*—This is the principal idea in these words, for in the latter part of the verse it is said—“Who is the head of all principality and power.” Christ is the alone king and head of the church, both in her militant and triumphant state. “He is the head of the body the church, the first-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it has pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell.” He is also given to be head over all things to the church. She is complete in him with respect to the laws delivered by him for the rule of her conduct—“God’s law is perfect, converting the soul.” The princes of this world may give laws, and command their subjects to obey, but they cannot impart moral ability to do their will; but Christ not only calls to duty, he also gives will and ability for the keeping of his commandments. He



says, "My grace is sufficient for you, my strength is made perfect in your weakness.—Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy days are, so shall thy strength be." As a governor, he leads his church in the path of righteousness for his own name's sake. He conducts them forth to combat their spiritual enemies, and secures to them the victory over them—"He is given for a witness of the people, for a leader and commander of the people." In him they have complete armour for their defense, and complete security that they shall be conquerors, and more than conquerors through him. They have the shield of faith, for a helmit they have the hope of salvation, for their sword they have the word of God, which is sharp and powerful for dividing asunder soul and spirit, joint and marrow. In him as their head, they have the most powerful leader and commander, as well as most honourable, skilful, and faithful alliances. Holy angels are on their side—"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Yea, the God of angels is their guide and protector—"God is our refuge and our strength, a present help in the time of trouble." Have they to fight against principalities, and powers, and spiritual wickednesses in high places? Christ has conquered Satan and all his angels, and has them in his chain, and can bind them or loose them at his pleasure. Have they to encounter wicked men, whose part and portion is in this present life? Christ has overcome the world; and his people are more than conquerors through him. Have they to contend with flesh and blood; with an army of lusts within them? Through him they are completely safe from their dominion; and shall obtain the victory over them—"O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ my Lord." Are their enemies cunning? He is infinite in wisdom; and knows all their evil designs, and how to overturn them. Are they lively and strong? He is omnipotent; and can dash them in pieces, as a potter dashes an earthen vessel that displeases him—"The eyes of the Lord run to

and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in behalf of" them who are on his side. All creatures in heaven, in earth, and in hell, are under his control, and he makes them subordinate for their good.

5. *All who savingly believe in Christ Jesus, are complete in him as the heir of all things.*—The Father "has appointed him heir of all things;" and "*they* are heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." The Lord Jesus Christ as God, is the possessor of heaven and earth; but the same extensive power and possessions are delegated to him as mediator—"All power, (says he,) is given to me, in heaven and in earth." This rich inheritance is bestowed on him for the benefit of the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. In him his people inherit all things—"All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, things present, or things to come; all things are yours, for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." All things are put in subjection to Christ, as the head of the church, for her benefit, and they are employed for this purpose as their necessities require—"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; I will be his Father, and he shall be my son." They receive from him, as the fountain of life, grace to help them in every time of need. The grace of pardon, the grace of acceptance, the grace of adoption, the grace of heart-regeneration, and soul-sanctification. All is treasured up in Christ. Glory as well as grace is treasured up in him. When he rose from the dead, all his people virtually rose with him, as their representative. His resurrection is an earnest and pledge of theirs. Hence they are said to be risen with him—"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." When he ascended, they also virtually ascended with him. Glory is to him an inheritance in possession, and to them an inheritance in reserve—"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, there you may be also.—Henceforth there

is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day." While eternal ages revolve, the believer in Jesus will be complete in unspeakable happiness and glory; but all that glory is presently in His possession. Though we have not attained to it in our own persons, we possess it in our exalted head. Did the Father give *him* a kingdom? He will also give *us* one. Has *he* taken his seat on his Father's throne? *We* shall also be admitted to sit down with him on the same throne.

Finally.—*We are therefore complete in him, both in what relates to grace here and glory hereafter.* How calm and composed then, should we be, amidst all the storms that assail us in time, and in prospect of passing through the billows of Jordan, leaving this world with all its frowns and smiles behind us, when we have such company, such enjoyments before us! And with what cheerfulness may we, at his command in whom our all is placed, lay down our charge, quit our stations and relations, and deposit our remains in the dust, in hope of reigning with him and his glorified saints at the resurrection! It matters not when or where we leave this world; the road to our Father's house is as short and safe from one part of the world as from another. Yet "It is sweet to lay our bones in the bosom of our native land; for the flowers which we love on earth shall brighten around our graves, and the trees whose gentle murmurs pleased the ear, shall hang their shadows over our sleeping dust." But it is some consolation that the resurrection morning will dawn as early upon our graves in the green woods of America, as in North Britain; and the sun-burnt African and the fair European shall rise at the same time to meet their Saviour and Judge, and be welcomed to his kingdom. May you and I, Christian reader, be found among that honored, that happy, that complete number!

## SERMON V.

### JACOB'S VOW: OR, THE BELIEVER'S TRUST IN GOD FOR TEMPORAL BLESSINGS.

“And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me and keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God; and this stone which I have set for a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.”—GENESIS xxviii. 20-22.

Jacob is one of those persons whose history is recorded, by the pen of inspiration, for the benefit of the church in every age; and perhaps there is no period of his life more interesting and instructive than that which is related in these and the preceding verses. It contains many highly important lessons, calculated to promote the edification and comfort of God's people at all times; and especially in the seasons of adversity and danger. Jacob, when a young man, was obliged to become an exile from his father's house, to save his life from the rage of an angry brother. Owing to the nature of property among men in that early period of the world, consisting mostly in flocks and herds, it was impracticable for him to take any part of that along with him which belonged to his father's house, and to which he had a claim as a child of the family, in order to assist him on his journey, and secure him a more welcome reception in a foreign land. Accordingly, we are told he left his father's house only with a staff in his hand. But this was not all, he not only left rich possessions and took his journey in an unknown road, without a guide or any mode of conveyance; but he had to part with what very few young

men have to part with in taking their journey for a foreign land, an aged, affectionate, godly father, and an indulgent mother, who had hitherto watched over his best interests with the greatest care. But though he had left his father's house without wealth and without a friend to accompany him in the trackless desert; he was in possession of what was infinitely more preferable, a spiritual blessing, which had been pronounced upon him by his father under the direction of the Holy Spirit, before he took his departure—"And Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel, thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban, thy mother's brother. And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham"—Verses 1-4.

With this blessing Jacob set out from his father's house, casting many a longing lingering look behind; and soon found in his own experience, that it was not merely the fond wish of an indulgent parent he had received, but a blessing from "the God of his salvation" in whom he had been carefully instructed, and to whose service he had been devoted—Verses 10-15. In these verses Jacob had a rich display of God's covenant, both in what he saw and what he heard. God proclaimed his covenant in these words—"I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac." Under that dispensation God made himself known in his new covenant character, by the name or designation of the God of Abraham and Isaac, because it was to them as the representatives of the Jewish church, that he revealed his covenant, in the way of taking their posterity as well as themselves into an external covenant relation with himself. He also renewed to him, the promises of that covenant, together with the grant

of the inheritance of Canaan to his posterity; which promises and grant had been made first to Abraham, and then to Isaac—"The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed."

From what he saw in the vision, he had a clear discovery of the channel in which all new covenant blessings flow from a God of grace to the children of men. You will notice, when God published his covenant, that he is represented as standing at the head of a ladder set upon the earth, the top of which reached to heaven. This ladder was a striking type of our Lord Jesus Christ, as mediator between God and man. The angels, we are told, ascended and descended upon this ladder. This represented Christ as the medium of all gracious communications between God and man. It is true that angels minister to the saints, but all their ministrations as the servants of God, employed in promoting his people's salvation, are through the medium of Jesus, "the mediator of the new covenant." It is in and through him that God blesses them with all heavenly and spiritual blessings.

The verses more immediately under consideration, contain an account of Jacob's vow, and of God revealing his covenant to him and promising him protection in the way whither he went. God had revealed himself to Jacob as a promising God; he had ratified his promise to him in a most solemn manner: it therefore became him to renew his engagements with God. Such exercise, either virtually or explicitly, is inseparably connected with taking hold of God's covenant by an appropriating act of faith. The believer's vows are just the echo or reply of God's promises. When he says—"It is my people," they say—"The Lord is my God." You will observe that this vow was made by Jacob in the exercise of faith. God had said to Jacob—"Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest." Jacob took hold of this promise, and upon this he rested his vow as recorded in our text—"If God will be with me and keep me in this way that I go, \* \* \* then shall the Lord be my God," &c. He expressed himself in this man-



ner, not because he doubted the promise which was given him, but because his resolutions could only take effect in the way of God's promises to him receiving their accomplishment. God must accomplish his promise to us, before we can perform our engagements to him, for unless he be with us in all our ways, we can do nothing.

The substance of Jacob's vow is first general, and then particular. It is, generally, expressed in these words—"Then shall the Lord be my God." We are not to suppose from this mode of expression, that Jacob did not close with God as his God and Father in covenant in the mean time. No; it only implies, that in the way of God's promises concerning his protection and provision being accomplished, he would receive additional evidence of his relation to him; and, that then he would have an opportunity of serving God in that place on some future day: for this general expression of his resolution, is only introductory to that more particular expression of it contained in verse 22—"And this stone which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee." These words contain, more peculiarly, the matter of Jacob's vow. He promised and vowed to build an altar to God in that place, and to serve him with his substance; but this could only be done in the way of God increasing his worldly riches. Jacob desired the good things of this life from the best of motives; not only for the support of his natural life, but also as means which he might employ in maintaining the cause of God. In this, as well as in many other things, his conduct is recorded for our imitation. Good were it for many whom the Lord has raised from poverty to affluence, who may have crossed the Atlantic with only a staff in their hand, but now by the blessing of God upon their labours may have become two bands, if they would remember their vows to Him, and give to the support of his gospel, as he has prospered them in the world.

For the better understanding of these words, and

that we may be stirred up to follow the good example contained in them, we shall, Christian reader,

I. Consider the manner in which Jacob's faith was exercised about *temporal blessings*.

II. Consider the influence which his faith had upon his conduct, in reference to these temporal mercies; both when he was poor and when he became rich.

I. Let us in the rest of the present Discourse consider the manner in which Jacob's faith was exercised about *temporal blessings*.

1. *He believed that God was the sovereign disposer of his lot and all his interests.*—Temporal blessings are the fruit of God's bounty, as the Creator and Preserver of the creatures which he has made. From this source they flow, though in different circumstances to the evil and the good, to the just and the unjust—"But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven, for He maketh the sun to rise upon the evil and the good, and sendeth rain upon the just and unjust." The providence of God, in this respect, embraces the wants of the rational as well as the irrational creation—"Who covereth the heavens with clouds, who prepares the rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains, who giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.—The eyes of all wait on thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season—thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." The providence of God is not a mere general disposal of his creatures and their actions, as those would have us believe who maintain the world is governed by second causes, which were set in motion by him who is the first cause, and now operate by certain fixed laws, without his immediate interference,—but it is particular; for though God governs the world, and supplies the wants of his creatures by the intervention of second causes, yet these operate as causes under the immediate influence of the great God as the First

Cause. To deny this, would be to ascribe to these second causes the attribute of independence; which belongs to God only. Our Creator and Preserver is the wise and merciful disposer of the lot of all his creatures, and his providence extends to the most minute circumstance connected with them. Accordingly, our Lord informs us that the very hairs of our heads are all numbered, and that not one sparrow can fall to the ground independent of the sovereign disposal of God.

But Jacob did not only believe in the doctrine of a common, but also of a special providence, of which God's own people are the objects. They are so, principally in respect of the spiritual benefits God confers upon them as a God of grace, through the mediation of his Son. But, though this is the case, they are also the objects of his special providence as a God of grace, in relation to their temporal good things. The dispensation of the benefits which flow from God's bounty as the God of nature to his own people, is influenced by him in a supernatural way as a God of grace, so as to be subservient to their spiritual and eternal interests, and so that they receive them from him divested of the curse which man entailed upon all his enjoyments by his fall, and accompanied with "the blessing which maketh rich and addeth no sorrow;" and in this respect they may be considered not only as the blessings of God's common, but also of his special providence. Or as it is expressed by a recent ecclesiastical union convention—"Common benefits being of an earthly and perishing nature, and common to believers and unbelievers, are not to be considered as purchased by Christ; but these benefits being by breach of covenant forfeited to all men, this forfeiture is, to believers, removed, and the sanctified use of them restored by the merit and mediation of Christ." In this way we are inclined to believe Jacob's faith was exercised about his common benefits; for he expected them to come to him through *a gracious channel*, and purposed to use them in subserviency to the advancement of God's glory and his own spiritual interests. He believed that he would receive such a share of the good things of this

life as would be most calculated to promote his spiritual and eternal interests.

2. *He was convinced that God was both able and willing to bestow upon his people a competent share of outward enjoyments.*—God's will in this respect is to be learned from his promises, and these promises extend to the wants and necessities of the body in this present life, as well as to the wants of the soul; though it must be confessed, that those which respect the latter, are more numerous and full than those which respect the former. God has promised to his people that "their bread shall be given them, and their water shall be made sure;" and that "they who wait upon him shall lack no good thing." God's people are encouraged to trust in him for temporal mercies, from the near relation he stands to them as their father and friend in Christ. If God so bountifully provides for the wants of irrational creatures,—if he clothe the grass of the field with verdure,—shall he not provide for the temporal wants of those who are so near and dear to him? He has given them his Son, and in him all spiritual and heavenly blessings; shall he not with them confer what is necessary for the body?—"What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

As Jacob's faith respected these benefits, and was grounded upon God's promise, so he was encouraged to expect its accomplishment from the consideration of the relation in which he stood to God. Are we among the generation that seek after the face of the God of Jacob, and are interested in his covenant? Then we need not fear that we shall be neglected in those things which He shall see to be for our good. It is not because he is unwilling or unable to bestow an abundance of worldly pleasures and riches upon his people, that we find them often in poverty and distress; but because he sees that the withholding such things from them is for their present and future benefit. We are not competent judges of those things which are most

adapted for us, for a depraved heart makes us call bitter sweet and sweet bitter. What things we think are working *for* us, we are often disposed to say are against us. Let us submit cheerfully to the wise and merciful ordering of Providence, believing that our lot is cast in a right manner, and the whole disposition of it from the Lord—"The Lord is a sun and shield, he will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from us, if we walk uprightly.—Godliness with contentment is great gain; having the promise of the life that now is, and also of that which is to come." Let us guard against murmuring, and aim at being content with such things as we have; for our God has said—"I will never leave thee, I will never forsake thee."

3. *Though Jacob believed that God was able and willing to bestow these temporal benefits upon his people, yet he was convinced that the extent to which they were to be enjoyed by them is very uncertain.*—The promises of God concerning temporal benefits, differ from his promises respecting spiritual blessings. In his promises of spiritual blessings, the benefits themselves are not only mentioned, but the extent in which they are to be enjoyed; first in a state of grace, and then in a state of glory. They are promised in all their extent, for he blesses his people "with all spiritual and heavenly blessings in Christ Jesus:" but the promises respecting temporal benefits are not of this definite nature. The particular share of temporal good things which they are to enjoy, is not specified. These promises neither secure that they shall have worldly affluence, nor even all the conveniences of this life; but they give security for what is far more important, that he will grant them such a share of this world's goods as he knows shall be best calculated to promote their spiritual interests; and that as long as he sees it to be for his glory and their good to retain them in the body, they shall have what is necessary for the support of their animal life. These promises therefore which relate to temporal benefits, though equally certain so far as they go, are less definite than those which respect spiritual blessings. Accordingly, the Lord's people, in dealing with him about these bene-

fits, study to adapt their petitions, and regulate their expectations, to the nature of these promises. Jacob leaves it entirely to the sovereignty of God, to determine upon the way by which he was to be provided for, the nature and the extent of his possessions, and the time and manner in which he was to return to that memorable spot where he had such a discovery of God's gracious relation to him and the interest he took in him, which caused him to say—"This is the house of God; this is the gate of heaven." Thus, though he was willing to be entirely at the disposal of his heavenly Father, when he was a stranger in a strange land, as to the openings of his providence, the means he would employ, the relations he would form, and the portion of this world's goods that was to fall to his share; yet he engages in a solemn manner that a tenth part should be devoted to his worship and laid out for his service—"Of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee." The believer, in dealing with God about spiritual blessings, is warranted to ask and expect not the half, but the whole of the kingdom, or all the blessings of grace and glory, because they have been made sure to him as a free gift in the gospel. But in dealing with the Most High respecting temporal benefits, he is not warranted to ask all the bounties of his common providence, but such a share of them as he shall see to be for his good. Hence our Lord teaches us to pray, not for wealth, but for *daily* and *necessary* food—"When ye pray, say, Give us this day our daily bread." They have been highly favoured, indeed, who have been brought up on the knees of pious parents, who have presented many a prayer, in private and unseen, for their temporal and eternal welfare. They do not know but their protection in the midst of danger, their supply in the midst of scarcity, the friends they have found, the temptations they have escaped, and the relations which have been formed, have been in answer to those petitions which were sent from the hearts of those who are now sleeping in the dust in a far distant land. Such should remember their early opportunities and engagements, and never be ashamed or afraid to appear



openly on the side of truth, and say—"Doubtless thou art our Father: though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not, thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer; thy name is from everlasting."—Those who have been religiously brought up, but who, when far from the eye or the advice of their parents, have conformed to the world, turned their back upon a scriptural profession, and forsaken the Lord God of their fathers, have an awful account to give at last.

4. *Jacob was convinced, that if God withheld from him his common benefits, either in a less or greater degree, it would be for God's own glory and his good.*—Jacob proposed to improve his temporal mercies for promoting his inward sense of divine goodness, and as evidences of God's care over him in a foreign land—"If God will be with me." But all he asks for these purposes, is bare support—"bread to eat and raiment to put on;" these he would consider as evidences of "the eyes of his heavenly Father being on him for good," when he was sojourning in the midst of strangers. Whence arose this moderation of desire in Jacob's mind about temporal mercies? It was only from a firm persuasion, that if God should withhold an increase of his outward enjoyments, it would be both for his present and future good. He asks them, because they were necessary for his support by the way, in order to the future service of God; and because they were means necessary towards the accomplishment of the promise of his return to his father's house in peace. He was persuaded, if riches were for his benefit, they would not be withheld; and if poverty and distress were for his good, his all-wise and merciful Father would speedily send them. He therefore cast himself on a gracious Providence; resolving to wait patiently for its determination, whatever should take place. This part of Jacob's conduct is worthy of our imitation. It is true that, many years after this, when he saw more clearly what were God's designs towards him, and how he had been faithful to his promise in bringing him back in peace, he said—"Joseph is not, Simeon is not, and ye will take away Benjamin also:

all these things are against me." But he lived to see that in place of them being against him, they were *for* him. His sons designed it for evil; but the God of Abraham and Isaac designed it for good, to save much people alive.—Were we careful to cultivate such a temper of mind, it would be an effectual preparation for the various trials and changes which we may have to meet with in this sinful, deceitful, and changeable world. However dark the night; however strong the gale and raging the waves; a belief that a skilful hand is at the helm, who knows the course better than we, and who will bring us safely into harbour, cheers and supports the mind amidst the howling of the tempest and the raging of the elements. If then the voyage of life should be somewhat more dangerous than we anticipated when we set sail for the land very far off, it has been all-wisely directed by "Him whose ways are in the sea, whose footsteps are in the mighty waters, and whose paths are past finding out." His ways are not as our ways, neither his thoughts as our thoughts. Every one who is brought in safety to the haven of rest, will sing—Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and I now dwell in the house of my God, for ever and ever.

5. *Jacob believed that the best way to obtain true enjoyment from his temporal mercies, was to renew his covenant relation with God, and to seek after closer fellowship and communion with Him as the God of his salvation.*—You see that Jacob's concern was to enjoy God's gracious presence, and to secure an evidence of this in the journey and changes that were before him. His aged father he had left behind, who had brought him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; also his partial and indulgent mother; with little hope of ever seeing them again in the land of the living: and when asleep that night on a damp bed and a hard pillow, he saw his need more than ever before, of being interested in the favour of Him, who is every where present, and who, though father and mother both should forsake him, was able and willing to take him up. It has very often taken place in the history of God's providential

dispensations, that those who have been devoted to Him in covenant in the days of their youth, but who had gone far astray, have been reduced to the last extremity of want or of danger, when God spake to them, first in the language of conviction—"What dost thou here?" and then in the language of compassion—"Fear not, I am with thee, be not dismayed, for I am thy God." Oh! that those who have been piously brought up, would remember that God's eye is upon them; that his vows are upon them; and that when asked to go in the ways of sin, they would say—"How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" Without God's gracious presence and protection, Jacob could not be happy; all the riches of this world could not satisfy him if these were denied: but with the favour of God, food and raiment, bread and water, whether in the open field with the bears around him, or in the warm tent with friends and kindred at home, he could be at ease and find satisfaction. God's gracious presence sweetens every circumstance in the believer's lot. It takes the sting out of adversity; renders outward prosperity subservient to our real happiness; disarms our enemies of their malice; makes rough places smooth, and crooked things straight;—"I will both lay me down in peace and sleep, for thou, Lord, only makest me to dwell in safety." Without God's gracious presence and blessing, worldly riches, instead of contributing to human happiness, will impair it and promote misery; for they are not the children's bread, but only the husks which the swine do eat: but they are real sources of enjoyment to those who receive them with God's blessing, because they tend to promote in them a sense of God's goodness towards them, and of the interest he takes in their temporal and spiritual prosperity. It is the blessing of God which makes us happy with a little meal in the barrel, and a little oil in the cruse, and that keeps these from being exhausted;—"He will bless thy bread and thy water." Daniel and the three children who lived upon plain coarse provisions, were happier in their own minds and looked fairer in their countenances, than those who ate of all the varieties

which came from the king's table. God impressed a more than ordinary blessing into their pulse: God's blessing was better than the king's venison. It was this which made an humble follower of Jesus, when sitting down to partake of the last morsel she had in the house, to say—"*All this, and Christ also!*" While the natural man looks no higher than the outward blessing itself, and places his happiness in its enjoyment; the believer, who has the blessing upon his basket and his store, receives the bounties of Providence with gratitude, and improves them as so many steps by which to ascend to their Author, as his portion and chief good. The natural man is tormented with either keeping or spending the bounties of Providence. Whatever way he disposes of them, they aggravate his cares, his anxieties, and his sorrows. They are his gods, and when they are taken away, what has he more?

"Robb'd of his gods, what has he left behind?

Oh cursed lust of gold, when, for thy sake,

The fool throws up his interest in both worlds;

First starved in this, then damn'd in that to come."

But he who, like Jacob, has God's blessing upon his enjoyments, whether they are large or small, considers himself only as a steward of these things, and that he is bound to lay them out for His service and honour from whom he has received them. He finds far more pleasure in serving the Lord with his substance, as Jacob promised to do, than the men of the world who consume it upon their lusts and pleasures.

Let us then "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto us." Jacob asked communion and fellowship with God first, and only so much of the good things of this life as were necessary for subsistence; but God granted him the former; and instead of only bestowing upon him the latter, he far exceeded his expectations, and conferred upon him great possessions. Whatever we have, if it do not come in the way of prayer, it does not come in the way of love; it may be given to us for

our hurt, and not for our benefit. The tree of mercy will not drop its fruit unless it be shaken by the hand of prayer.

6. *Jacob believed that God was able to provide for the temporal wants of his people, even when they should be utterly at a loss what to do.*—At this time Jacob was in poverty, and his prospects for wealth were dark indeed. He had left his father's house, in which, if he could have remained in safety, he had the prospect of plenty; and though he was going to a strange country, not knowing what was to befall him there, or what kind of a reception he was to meet with, yet he believed that God could make his way prosperous: "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." His expectations were not disappointed, and the way God made provision for him and his family was such as far exceeded human calculations, as appears from the history of his after life. He transferred the wealth of Laban to him and his family, after his wages had been unjustly changed ten times; so that after he had spent twenty years in Padanaram in the station of a servant, he left it with great riches. We find this exemplified in the case of multitudes besides Jacob; which proves that the same wise, unseen, and merciful hand is ordering them that fear Him, to defend them, to provide for them, and to conduct them. Though God, in all ordinary cases, provides for his people's necessities without a direct miracle, yet the time and the manner in which they have often had their wants supplied, have been next to miraculous. The open doors which he has set before them which no man could shut, the roads through which they were conducted of which they were entirely ignorant, and the unexpected quarters whence relief has come to them, are sufficient to convince us, that God deals often in this way with his people, just to let them see his love for them, his care about them, and his ability to provide for their wants when all human calculations and prospects fail.

Let us, then, remember the way the Lord our God has led us in this wilderness in the years that are past,

and trust in Him for the time to come. And when we know not whether to turn to the right hand or the left, he can cause us to hear a voice behind us, saying--“This is the way, walk ye in it!” He has promised to them that trust in him, to “lead them in ways they knew not, and in paths they have not known. These things he will do for them, and not forsake them.”

2031. 15



## SERMON VI.

### THE SAME SUBJECT CONCLUDED.

“And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me and keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone which I have set for a pillar shall be God’s house; and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.”—GENESIS xxviii. 20–22.

In the last Discourse we endeavoured to illustrate at large, the manner in which Jacob’s faith was exercised with respect to the blessings for this life—called often *Temporal Benefits*. We come now to consider:

II. The influence which Jacob’s faith had upon his conduct, in reference to temporal mercies; both when he was poor and when he was rich.

1. *When Jacob was poor, his faith led him to his prayers.*—“And Jacob vowed a vow, and said,” &c. Poverty is no enemy to the exercise of prayer; for where faith is in the heart, let them be as poor as Job, they will hold fast their integrity, and say, “The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord.” True faith has a powerful influence upon the practice of men; for in whatever situation Divine Providence has been pleased to place them, it powerfully leads them out to the practice of every religious duty, especially to be diligent in prayer. Faith is a persuasion of God’s willingness to bestow upon us both what respects our present comfort and future happiness. By prayer we acknowledge our dependence upon God for what relates both to this life and that which is to come; so that our diligence in the duty of prayer will always be in proportion to our faith. Perhaps you may object

to some of these statements, and say, "Why pray for these things which God has promised to bestow upon us? Our prayers cannot alter his determination either for us or against us." It is true we have to deal with a God who needs not to be informed of our wants or dangers. He knows well what we need before we ask him; but it is certainly just that we, his dependent creatures, should, by prayer and thanksgiving, signify our homage to, and our dependence upon him as our Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer, for our being and well-being, and that we owe all the good we enjoy, or expect to receive, to his free and unmerited favour: accordingly, "ask and ye shall receive," is the rule God has established in his house. To this rule all are bound to conform, by the strongest motives of duty and interest. God's promises are both certain and extensive: still he has said, "For these things I will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them." Hence we find a true and lively faith in God's promises, whether they respect temporal or spiritual benefits, has always excited to the exercise of prayer for the fulfilling of these promises. No sooner had Nathan been sent to David with the gracious message that God would establish his kingdom of Israel for ever, than he went into God's house and addressed Him in solemn prayer for the accomplishment of that promise—"And now, O Lord God, the word thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, establish it for ever, and do as thou hast said," &c. 2 Sam. vii. 25, 26. Daniel, as soon as he had learned from books that the seventy years of Judah's captivity were near a close, set himself to ask the restoration of the Jews by prayer and supplication. And, hence, we find that God had no sooner promised to Jacob that he would be with him in the way whither he went, and bring him again to his father's house, than *immediately* he began to sue for the accomplishment of the promise by prayer. Prayer, in a firm persuasion of the truth of God's promises, is the appointed means for obtaining the blessing promised; and we know that no rightly exercised believer

in Christ ever expects the end promised without the use of those means which lead to it.

Let us imitate Jacob, and though poor in this world, be found fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, and desiring to be rich in faith, heirs of the inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Our poverty, if sanctified to us, is a blessing in disguise. Is not that a blessing which forces the wandering prodigal to think of the home he has forsaken, and brings him back again to his father's house? O, brethren, if poverty and sorrow, if perplexity and trouble, if pain and sickness, will but wean our hearts from this wretched world, and cause our souls to long for heaven—if they will but force the heart to feel, and the tears of penitence and love to flow—if they will but promote and sweeten our communion with God, and make us more meet for the enjoyment of him in his kingdom—let us ever regard them as blessings, let us welcome them as friends, let us ever be thankful for tribulation. Who can tell what would have been your condition, or mine, or what would have been our hope, or what our eternal home, if God had granted to us uninterrupted prosperity, and not visited us with poverty, suffering, and sorrow? Let us bless God for the way by which he has led us, for the things which he has denied us, and for the common or spiritual mercies which he has bestowed upon us; of the least of which we are unworthy.

2. *Jacob's faith, when he was poor, led him to the use of means for acquiring what was necessary for his temporal support.*—God has promised such a share of this world's goods to his people as he sees shall be for His glory and their good—that their “bread shall be given them, and their water made sure.” But to expect the accomplishment of this promise without attending to the means which God has appointed for promoting our wealth and outward estate, would not be faith, but presumption. For God's *promises* only warrant us to expect what is necessary, both for our temporal and spiritual support, in the way of using the means for acquiring them. Accordingly, the apostle expressly

condemns idleness, and declares that those who will not work should not eat—"For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any man should not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some who walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busy-bodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread." 2 Thess. iii. 10-12. We are told by Solomon of the virtuous woman, whose price is far above rubies, that "she seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchants. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and *eateth not the bread of idleness*. Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her." He who eats the bread of idleness, and "whose hands refuse to labour," must live upon the labour of others, and resembles the drones in the hive, who eat the honey, and enjoy the shelter that have been the result of the labour of the working bees. To this general rule, however, there must be exceptions. Upon the other hand, a supreme love of the world, and an over-anxious concern about its riches, are as incompatible with true religion, as indifference about being "diligent in business," or "looking well to our flocks and herds"—"For if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." But negligence in business, to the injury of ourselves and family, or creditors, is also the opposite extreme. It does not only intimate weak faith, but the want of faith—"For if any man provide not for his own, especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel—Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise."

All, therefore, who trust in God, either for their temporal or their spiritual support, will be found diligent in the use of the appointed means. Jacob was one of this class of persons. He believed that God was the sovereign disposer of his lot, and all his interests;

but you will observe that this persuasion, instead of leading to indolence, stimulated him to industry; and he did not even account a servile life too mean, or say he was ashamed to dig, when necessary, to provide for himself and family. He submitted patiently to the greatest exposure and drudgery for this purpose when with his penurious uncle in Padan-aram. Thus we find him saying—"In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes." Jacob had not only a promise of temporal support, but that promise was made to him with special application; still we see that he expected the accomplishment of it in the use of means, in the way of attending to his business. In this respect his conduct is worthy of our imitation. When we see so many instances of the hand of the diligent making themselves rich and those connected with them, as well as having something to spare for God's house and the circulation of his Word, let us also be found "diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;" and not say, when Providence presents favourable opportunities for laying up something for the wants of old age, or the day of distress, "a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep;" lest our "poverty come upon us as one that travelleth, and our want as an armed man."—"Be not among wine-bibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty; and drowsiness shall clothe a man in rags."

3. *Jacob's faith, when he was poor, prevented him from using unlawful means to obtain riches.*—True faith in God for temporal support, is the most powerful incitement to real honesty: on the other hand, they who lack this faith are under strong temptations to use unlawful means to acquire wealth. They who fervently believe in God as the wise disposer of their lot, and all their interests, are patient and resigned under outward disappointments, knowing that God can overrule these for his own glory, and their good. Besides, though the believer's worldly property should faint and fail him, should take the wings of an eagle and fly out of

his sight, the world is not his portion; God in Christ is his portion, and he finds in Him what is calculated to satisfy the desires of his soul, amidst all the disappointments and trials which he may meet with in this world. This leads him to guard against covetousness, knowing that "the love of money is the root of all evil; which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." Hence the prayer of faith, which availeth much, is—"Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain." But the unbeliever seeks for happiness in the present life, and when his worldly prospects are disappointed, and when he cannot obtain what is necessary for his wants or his avarice, his all is at stake, consequently he is under the strongest temptations to secure or recover it by unlawful means. With all such, to lie, to cheat, to steal, or in any way to take the advantage of his neighbour, is looked upon as necessary and harmless: "It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer; but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth."

Such conduct as this is common in our day, and, with sorrow we have to say, too prevalent among those professing godliness, from whom better things might be expected. With Jacob, temporal things were but a secondary object. He had chosen God for his portion, and trusted him for all that he needed both for time and for eternity; so that when poor, and in a strange land, he did not attempt to better his situation by unlawful and dishonourable means. He knew that this would have been to deny his dependence upon God, and manifest a disregard to his authority. Jacob, by dependence upon God, waiting his time, using means which were likely to succeed, and praying for a blessing upon them, became rich, though in a strange country, and connected with a man who envied his prosperity. All his riches were acquired by lawful means. He had all his speckled and spotted cattle from Laban as his



hire, by a fair and lawful agreement; and though God multiplied these beyond his expectation, he had a right to dispose of his property as seemed good in his sight; and the means Jacob used, upon this occasion, met with God's approbation. Hence we find Jacob declaring that the whole matter was brought about by divine interposition. Gen. xxxi. 5, 6, 7, 8. When Laban pursued Jacob when he fled from Padan-aram, he boldly challenged him to produce one instance of dishonesty in his conduct all the time he had been in his employment: on the contrary, he had made up losses which had occurred, at his own expense, which should have been sustained by Laban—Gen. xxxi. 36-42; "And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban: and Jacob answered, and said to Laban, What is my trespass? what is my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me? Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household-stuff? set it here before my brethren, and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both. These twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she-goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten. That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bore the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes. Thus have I been twenty years in thy house: I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages ten times. Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the Fear of Isaac had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction, and the labour of mine hands, and rebuked thee yesternight." Let these things induce us to take the God of Jacob for our refuge; make him our fear and our dread; use honest and honourable means to have our wants supplied, or our wealth increased; and, though our beginning may be small, our latter end may greatly increase: but let us not withhold what is just, lest it should tend to poverty; or call in question

God's ability to provide for us, or for ours, by having recourse to gambling, lotteries, or *life insurances*, which many betake themselves to, rather than to plain honest dealing and dependence upon the divine blessing. These are some of the gods of Ekron, that have so many worshippers in our land. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are *true*, whatsoever things are *honest*, whatsoever things are *just*, whatsoever things are *pure*, whatsoever things are *lovely*, whatsoever things are of *good report*; if there be any *virtue*, if there be any *praise*, think of these things."

4. *Jacob's faith, when he was poor, served to moderate his desire towards the world, and to leave to his heavenly Father the issue of his endeavours to improve his circumstances.*—The true believer is a person who has given up this world as his portion, and no longer seeks for happiness in its profits and pleasures. He is diligent in business; but his pursuit after this world is always subordinated to his concern for the one thing needful. He seeks this first; and, having found it, he is prepared for meeting disappointments of a temporal nature. Accordingly we find Jacob, though in poverty, and in the character of a servant for twenty years, possessing his soul in patience. He neither murmured nor repined at the dispensations of Providence. He did not anticipate the openings of Providence for altering his circumstances for the better, or for facilitating the accomplishment of the promise given to him of a safe return to his father's house. He carefully observed the hand of the Lord in the way that he was leading him and dealing with him; and studied to be in the path of duty, leaving the issue with his God. In this respect his conduct is recommended for our imitation. It is dangerous to hasten to be rich. Though we are warranted to embrace the openings of Providence for bettering our outward circumstances, it is unsafe to anticipate these, or run before Providence. By doing so we assume God's prerogative, and attempt to take the management of our lot in our own hand; and, when this is the case, we expose ourselves to innumerable snares and temptations. They who "seek the kingdom of

God first," and temporal good things only in subordination to the "one thing needful," and in a dependence upon God's blessing upon these endeavours, are under the care of a special providence. They are "blessed in their basket, and in their store; in their down-sitting and in their up-rising:" but, on the contrary, they who are discontented with the condition in which God has placed them, and are determined to be rich, though they should go out of that path he has evidently marked out for them in his providence, throw themselves out of his special protection, and, if they should succeed, they do it in the way of entailing a curse upon all their enjoyments—"Having food and raiment, let us therewith be content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."

5. *Jacob's faith, when he was rich, led him to acknowledge God as his benefactor.*—Unsanctified riches wean the heart from the Father of our mercies, and the God of all our consolation. Hence it is that multitudes upon whom he bestows the bounties of common providence in great abundance, are the least disposed to acknowledge him as the bountiful giver of all they enjoy. They ascribe their prosperity to their own diligence. They view it solely as the effect of their own industry, or good fortune, without acknowledging any superior cause. But Jacob's faith disposed him to look unto his God and Father in covenant, as the source whence came all his mercies. He believed and confessed that it was He that gave him power and opportunities to become rich; and that while the lot was cast into his lap, the whole disposing of it was from the Lord. He knew that the upper springs and the nether-springs of all his earthly and heavenly comfort lay in him who was the God of his salvation. But though he knew

that the promise would not fail, "which was given him as the ground of his sure hope," yet he did not eat the bread of violence, nor of idleness. His wealth was obtained by the sweat of his face. The great increase of his stock, immediately before he left Padan-aram, though obtained in a way somewhat miraculous, was only his just right—for, formerly, Laban had changed his wages ten times—still you will observe that he does not ascribe his riches to his own industry or wisdom, but to God's bounty. To this purpose are his words to his wives—"And he said unto them, I see your father's countenance, that it is not toward me as before: but the God of my father hath been with me. And ye know that with all my power I have served your father. And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times: but God suffered him not to hurt me. If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare speckled: and if he said thus, The ring-streaked shall be thy hire; then bare all the cattle ring-streaked. *Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to me.*" We find also the same sentiment expressed in his address to God at Mahanaim—"And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant: for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands." This was not a temporary impression, like that which wicked men feel sometimes, when God unexpectedly loads them with the common bounties of his providence, but an abiding sentiment of gratitude in his breast, through all the changes of life, and which was felt and expressed by him in a most lively and humble manner at his dying hour. While his thoughts were principally engaged about those spiritual blessings God had bestowed upon him, he did not forget his kindness in granting to him a loan of much of His temporal mercies. "And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers

Abraham and Isaac did walk, *the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads*; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth." Oh, then, let us, whether we are poor or rich, despised or esteemed, young or old, live unto God, and in a grateful remembrance of His mercies towards us who has led us and fed us all our life long! Let us live the life, if we would be found dying the death, of the righteous!

6. *Jacob's faith when he was rich, kept him humble.*—Riches have a wonderful tendency, upon a graceless mind, in fostering its natural pride and vanity. They puff up the fleshly mind. Hence we often find the same persons, who, when poor, were gentle, condescending, and agreeable, when they grow rich, become proud, malignant, implacable, and unmerciful. The fascinating charms of riches change, as it were, their natural dispositions and their sentiments; but this change is not for the better, but for the worse. Pride, idleness, and wantonness, are worms which breed in these heaps of unsanctified riches which many are found collecting. They harden the heart against God. He gives them fulness of bread, and they lift up the heel against him. As in the natural body, the more fat the less blood in the veins, and the less animal spirits: so the more outward plenty, too often the less inward piety. It is true that riches sometimes have an influence on the people of God, at times, to cause them to forget their origin, their standing, and their destination; but this is owing to the weakness, and not to the influence, of their faith. True faith, when in lively exercise, will have quite the opposite effect in the season of prosperity. It is like the ballast which keeps the ship steady in the water, and prevents her from being upset by those sudden and violent gusts that may assail her during a long voyage. True faith in God leads to confide in him during the storm, and confess him as the author of all our mercies. The true believer considers that he has nothing but what he has received, and that he has no

ground for boasting. When rich, instead of being puffed up with high notions of his own superiority, he is filled with astonishment at God's kindness in granting to him such a large share of the bounties of his providence, and with a deep sense of his own unworthiness. When he observes others around him oppressed with poverty, in place of improving such a scene for promoting his pride, he improves it for promoting his humility. He considers himself no better than they, and ascribes the difference to the sovereign and bountiful providence of God. Hence we seldom find the Lord's people in a more humble frame of mind than when their heavenly Father bestows upon them some striking manifestations of his goodness. Witness David's exercise after he was exalted from following the ewes with young to the throne of Israel: "Then went king David in and sat before the Lord, and said, Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in thy sight; but thou hast also spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord God?" 2 Sam. vii. 18, 19. The same humble spirit appeared in Jacob when he was rich. The increase of his riches did not change his disposition in this respect. Few things are more descriptive of a graceless heart than the pride of worldly riches. These may appear great to those who have no other portion; but they are of small importance to a child of God, and an heir of immortal glory. We have little need to be proud of what we have, for it may soon be taken from us, or we may soon be taken from it. How often do we see the abrupt termination of human schemes and human greatness!—man dies and his expectations perish—the thread is snapped asunder almost before he began to wind it.

7. *Jacob's faith, when he was rich, led him to improve the bounties of Providence for increasing his inward sense of God's kindness towards him, and his care about him.*—Jacob, when poor, resolved that if God should be with him, and give him bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that he should come again to his father's house, then



the Lord should be his God; that is, he would improve the bounties of Providence, and his gracious protection, as marks of God's covenant relation to him, and his paternal care about him, for his spiritual comfort and encouragement in his service. And we find he acted up to this resolution when he became rich. Behold with what warmth of devotion and lively gratitude he acknowledged God's kindness towards him in a strange land, when returning to his father's house—"I am not worthy of the least of thy mercies, and of all the truth thou hast shown to thy servant: for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands." The same lively sense of divine goodness abode with him to old age, when he worshipped God leaning upon his staff, and when he lay upon his death-bed taking farewell of this world and all its pleasures and sorrows. In this way the blessings of common providence assume a special form, as they become so many steps by which the heaven-born soul ascends to God as the fountain of his happiness, and so many marks by which the believer discerns God's paternal regard, and reads his own interest in His favour.

8. *Jacob's faith, when rich, led him to employ his worldly substance for the more perfect observance of the sacred institutions of divine worship.*—God has wisely ordained, that in every period of the church a part of the outward mercies which he has bestowed upon his worshippers, should be laid out for the support of his ordinances, and for the maintenance of those who minister in holy things. It is but just and reasonable that men should devote a portion of their substance in the more immediate service of that God from whom they derive life, breath, and all things. They are to do this in token of their gratitude to God as their Creator and bountiful Preserver, but more especially as their Redeemer. He demands this of all gospel worshippers, as an evidence of their love to him, and as a fruit of their profiting under the means of grace. In place of looking upon it, as some do, to be a burden, it should be accounted as a privilege to have an opportunity of contributing for the support of God's ordinances, and

of those who are sent in his name to beseech sinners to be reconciled unto him; since both are enjoined by the same high authority. God has not only enjoined that they who preach the gospel should live by the gospel, but also that they who hear the gospel should support its ministers in a respectable and comfortable manner—"Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple, and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14. It is as much the duty of those who are members of the church to contribute for the support of the gospel among themselves, and to send it unto others, as it is for them to take their seat at the table of the Lord, and show forth his death. Both are enjoined by the same authority; and we should remember that for neglecting or despising any one of these things required of us, each one will have to give an account of himself and of his doings unto God. "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we should reap your carnal things?"

Under the former dispensation, the tenth of the worldly substance of God's worshippers was to be applied for the purpose of supporting the priesthood, and the temple service, by express appointment; and many are convinced that the same rule is required by God to be observed under the gospel, and from a sense of duty give the tenth of all they possess unto the Lord. But even though the same rule cannot be proved to extend to the church under the New Testament dispensation, yet, if circumstances require it, even the tenth should be devoted, and more, before gospel ordinances should be permitted to fail among a people. You will observe that in Jacob's day God had not, by any positive law, appointed the tenth to be devoted to his service, any more than he has done in our day, yet he purposed freely to give it if it lay within his power—"Of all that thou shalt give me, I will even give the tenth unto thee." This was his purpose when he was a poor lad, with his staff in his hand, sojourning in a

strange land. He had no stronger motives in wishing to be rich, than that he might have wherewith to serve the Lord, by devoting to him a part of his substance which he might be pleased to cast into his lot. And when God blessed his labours, and gave him great abundance, he did not act like many, who, when they wax fat, kick, and exclaim, "Who is the Lord that we should obey him?" Our riches are our own, who is Lord over us? No, he went to the place where God at first spoke with him, for the express purpose of performing his vow. Oh that Jacob's example were attended to!—"And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Beth-el, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother. Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments. And let us arise, and go up to Beth-el; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went." Gen. xxxv. 1-3. We cannot have a more honourable motive in wishing to become rich, than that we may have it in our power to appropriate a portion of our wealth unto the Lord; neither can we make a better use of what may be laid to our hand, than by consecrating a part of our gain to the Lord, and of our substance to the Lord of the whole earth. By acting in this way God will prosper the work of our hands—"Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Mal. iii. 10.

By way of improvement of the subject:—

1. If we would wish to cultivate Jacob's spirit about temporal mercies, and arrive at his attainments, let us *guard against covetousness*—"Take heed (said Jesus,) and beware of covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Covetousness may be defined to be an excessive or

irregular desire after those worldly goods which we have not, and which God in his providence does not see meet to grant to us. This temper of mind is directly opposite to that entire dependence upon God as the wise and sovereign disposer of our outward circumstances, and that moderate desire after temporal mercies, resignation to the will of God, and contentment with our own condition, which constituted such prominent features in Jacob's character. It intimates an unwillingness to be at God's disposal—a distrust of his promise of temporal support—and is, in effect, a usurpation of God's prerogative, and an attempt to assume the reins of his government in our own hands. Let us ever believe that the circumstances in which God has placed us are most adapted for our present and future good. Such a persuasion as this will sweeten every bitter ingredient which may be in our cup.—But perhaps you may say, “Had I more of this world's goods, I would be more able and more willing to serve God with my substance than now.” That many may be truly sincere in such desires we would readily grant; but it is only those who study *at present* to do all that lies within their power to honour the Lord with their substance, on whose words or views we can rely that they will cast into the treasury in proportion as the Lord shall prosper them. Giving to the Lord is with many, like “giving themselves” to the Lord; put off to a more convenient season, and that season to suit them seldom or never comes. “I have bought a piece of land, and *I must pay for it first, before I contribute for the gospel:*” and when the land is paid, you will find him saying, I must pull down my old house and barns, and build better ones in their place; and then, after that, he will tell us he has married a wife, and, therefore (charity begins at home!) I must provide for my own household; I pray thee have me excused. Show me a young man who fears the Lord aright, and I will show you one, who, when he becomes two bands, will offer none of these excuses, nor grumble about serving the Lord with the first fruits of his increase—“For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted

according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not." Christ observed many that were rich casting in much to the treasury; but he only commended the poor widow who cast in two mites, because the small offering was more for *her* ability than the large sums were for the wealthy—"And he said, Of a truth, I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast in more than they all. For all these have of their abundance cast into the offering of God; but she of her penury hath cast in all that she had."

2. If we would wish to enjoy Jacob's faith, and have the approbation of the God of Jacob, let us *consider the vanity of all worldly riches and enjoyments*.—That they cannot confer real happiness we have abundance of evidence to convince us. The rich man is usually the most unhappy; for his desires after his own riches, and his love for them, increase with his gain. Is he become a miser, who can neither take the use of it himself, nor permit any other to do it? He is a rich poor man, deprived of peace of conscience either by night or day. "The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not suffer them to sleep." Is he a profligate? His mind is racked with finding out methods of spending his substance in gratifying his carnal appetites, which never say they have enough; and in the end such indulgences will fill the soul with bitter remorse. "It will bite as a serpent, and sting as an adder." The truth is, worldly riches, of themselves, cannot yield any happiness to their possessor. They are but broken cisterns, which can hold no water. They can afford no comfort in a dying hour. Though *Dives* was exceedingly rich, and fared sumptuously every day, yet he died the death of the wicked, without any hope of salvation; and when in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, he could not purchase one drop of water to cool his burning tongue. Riches are only valuable when God gives us a heart to use them for the purpose of his glory. Let us aim at having a better foundation on which to rest our eternal

interest, than the man had who said to his soul, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, eat, drink, and be merry;" lest it may also be said to us, "Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required at thine hand; and whose shall those things be that thou hast provided?"





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